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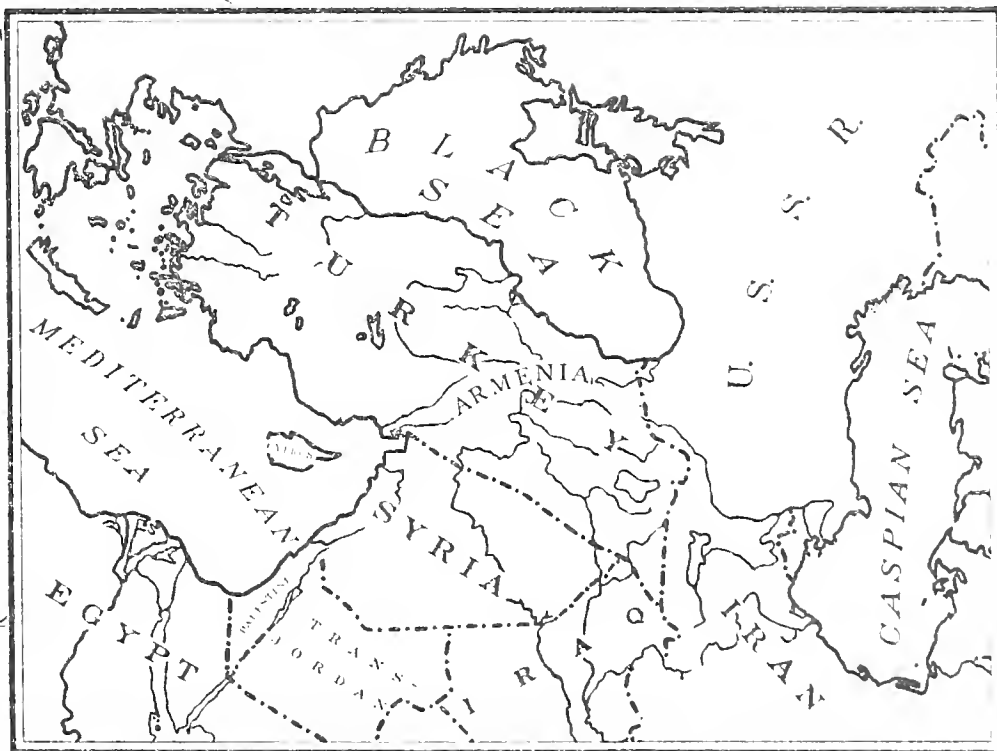
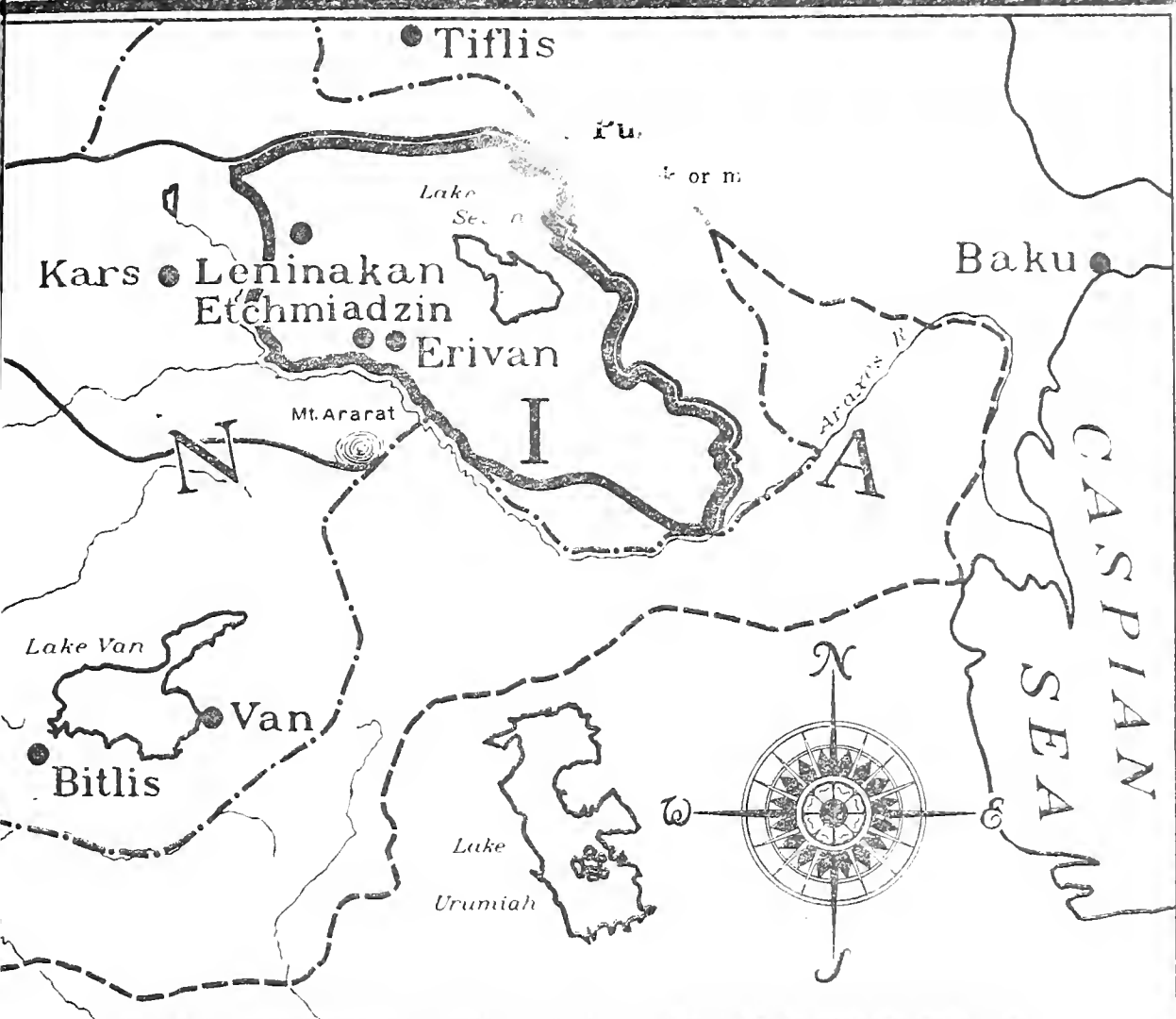
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THE
ARMENIANS IN MASSACHUSETTS

AMERICAN GUIDE SERIES

THE ARMENIANS IN MASSACHUSETTS

*Written and compiled by the Federal Writers' Project of the
Works Progress Administration for the State of Massachusetts*

The Armenian Historical Society, Cooperating Sponsor

Illustrated



The Armenian Historical Society, Boston.
1937

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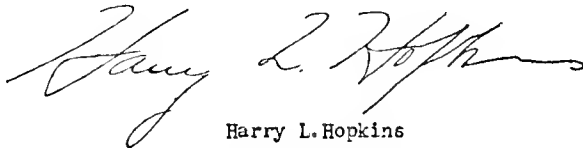
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HARRY L. HOPKINS
ADMINISTRATOR

In assembling material for the American Guido Series, the workers of the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration gathered a wealth of information on such diverse topics as history, folklore, cultural background, social and economic trends, and racial studies. This material overflowed the natural bounds of the State Guides, and requests were received from various racial groups that it be organized into separate studies. As a result a number of books presenting accounts of various ethnic groups by cities, states, and regions were undertaken.

The Armenians in Massachusetts is the first of these studies to be published in Massachusetts and will be followed by treatises on other groups. The value of such studies, tracing the varied contributions and influences on American culture, cannot be overestimated. It is our hope that after sufficient material on this subject has been assembled and published, it will be integrated into a study, national in scope, which will be of great value to the student of American civilization.

The Federal Writers' Project, directed by Henry G. Alsberg, is administered by Ellen S. Woodward, WPA Assistant Administrator.



Harry L. Hopkins
Administrator

FOREWORD

The history of the Armenians in Massachusetts is necessarily a part of American history since it is one of the tributary streams of the American past.

The Armenians are among the most recent of the newcomers to America. They too have been subjected to the melting pot which is the strongest factor in effecting the unification of the American culture. I hope the future generations of Armenians will maintain the traditional industry and high ideals of the Armenian race. The merging of the old and the new is the tried method of continuing progress.

Historians of a later day will find this survey valuable as it describes how one of the many races of America wove itself into the fabric of Western living and standards; it also serves to show that the State of Massachusetts was an anchorage for the Armenians just as it was for the earlier and better known ancestors of New England and America.

This work is unique in that it records historical facts still fresh in the living mind. For that reason and for the completeness and accuracy of this history I consider the present work by the Federal Writers of the Works Progress Administration of great value. The Federal Writers' Project deserves real gratitude for the successful carrying out of an undertaking of this kind.

Varaztad H. Kazanjian

PREFACE

The "History of the Armenians in Massachusetts" is the first in a series of racial surveys in preparation by the Federal Writers' Project of this State. These surveys will present a comprehensive record of those ethnic factors which have been influential in the growth of the Commonwealth. Massachusetts, with over four and a quarter million people, has a population which is 65% of foreign birth or of foreign or foreign-mixed parentage. This is the second largest percentage with a foreign strain recorded for any state in the Union.

Massachusetts therefore offers for analysis an unusually interesting cross-section composed of varied racial elements derived from all parts of the world, which merge under the glass into a colorful, changing pattern of contemporary society. In that pattern old-world design is still perceptible, but it is fading and disappearing as time and environment alter the composition. Foreign language societies and publications, found in numbers here, tend to perpetuate that pride in the lands of national origin which has so far preserved the individuality of the ethnic groups. But the slow process of assimilation is inexorable. Old-world legends are forgotten, superstitions vanish before young laughter, superficial manners, and even those national customs based upon solemn religious and patriotic tradition, yield to newer conventions.

If the history of the immigrant groups is to be written—and it has been singularly neglected—data must be compiled before the early period grows dim in living memories. Written records are fragmentary, and the testimony of children and grandchildren grows less trustworthy with the passage of time. The Writers' Project approaches the task of assembling and interpreting ethnic data with the belief that its proposed series of publications will make an original and valuable contribution to the history of the Commonwealth.

We wish to express our thanks to the many organizations and individuals who helped with information. Mr. Dikran H. Boyajian, President of the Armenian Historical Society, read and approved the text. Mr. M. G. Varadzine of the "Hairenik" staff, Mr. James C. Mandalian, editor of "Hairenik Weekly," Mr. B. Norhad, editor of the "Armenian Mirror," Mr. Vahan C. Vahan, Armenian historian, and Professor H. B. Davis of Simmons College served at all times as consultants and advisors.

The poems in the section on literature are quoted with the special permission of the translators.

The book was prepared under the editorial direction of Mr. Charles Goldenberg, Supervisor of Racial Surveys for the Federal Writers' Project of Massachusetts.

Ray Allen Billington
Massachusetts State Director
Federal Writers' Project

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I

ARMENIA, THE COUNTRY AND THE PEOPLE

The development of Massachusetts through the last century has been greatly influenced, and indeed its trend conditioned, by the arrival and gradual assimilation of numerous foreign groups. Among these are the approximately twenty-two thousand Armenians who now constitute slightly less than one-half of one per cent of the State's population. Although so small a group and comparatively late in arriving on the Massachusetts scene, they have played their part in that pageant of the nations which forms a colorful shifting background in the swift American drama.

Those traits designated as racial characteristics are the result of centuries of experience, and they are the fundamental basis for any real and lasting contribution of the old-world civilizations to the new. The wars which since the beginning of history have devastated Armenia, the forced migrations of her people, the play of varied alien cultures upon the minds of successive generations—these and other vital factors have determined Armenian racial characteristics, and so the nature of any Armenian influence upon this Commonwealth. To understand the history of the Armenians in Massachusetts, it is necessary to revert several millenia and consider the national story which had its beginning at the base of Mt. Ararat in Asia.

Armenia, on the borderland between Asia and Europe, is that territory extending from the Peninsula

of Asia Minor to the Caspian Sea in the east, and from the Black Sea and the Caucasus Mountains to the plains of Mesopotamia in the south. For more than twenty-five centuries the Armenians have lived in this region, sometimes as an independent nation, sometimes under the domination of one or more foreign peoples, with the frontiers of their land continually and arbitrarily changing.

The present name—Armenia—has been applied to this country ever since the latter part of the sixth century B.C. Before that time the eastern part of this territory was known to the Assyrians, who waged many a bloody battle to subjugate the mountain people who had lived there from the fourteenth to the sixth century before the Christian era, as Nairi, Urartu, and Biaina.

These early inhabitants of Armenia called themselves Khaldi after their chief god Khald, and have been identified as a kindred race of the Hittites of Asia Minor. It was this region that the Romans later called Armenia Major, while designating the territory to the west as Armenia Minor. Another province in Asia Minor, bounded by the Mediterranean Sea, the Taurus Mountains and the Gulf of Alexandretta, also came to be known as Lesser Armenia, although its geographical name has been and still is Cilicia.

During the struggles between the Assyrians and the Khaldians of Urartu new hordes of Aryans were invading Asia Minor both from the West and the Caucasus. About the sixth century B.C. the Khaldians were over-powered by Indo-European tribes who soon subjugated and settled the country. Some of the ancient inhabitants retired into the mountains; those

who remained were absorbed by the new-comers, who imposed upon them not only their language but also their name.

According to Herodotus and other Greek writers the tribe that took possession of Urartu was the Armenian, whom they consider akin to the Phrygian tribe that had migrated to Asia Minor from Thrace. The first mention of this country under its new name appears in the inscription of Darius Hystaspes, king of Persia, on a cliff at Behistun, dating circa 521 B.C. The inscription recounts the exploits of this ruler in three languages—Persian, Elamese and Assyrian. It is in the Persian version that Armina and Armaniya have been substituted for the name Urartu as used in the Assyrian version.

It is significant to note that the Armenians themselves never call their country Armenia nor themselves Armenians. To them their fatherland is Haiasdan or Haiots Yerkir and they are Hai or Haier. This nomenclature is due to the ancient Armenian legend which traces the origin of the race to Haik, a great-great-grandson of Noah of Biblical fame. Haik, according to the legend, migrated to Armenia from Sumeria (Mesopotamia) and there established his kingdom.

By its very geographical situation, on the dangerous road from Asia to Europe, Armenia invited the disasters which from the earliest days of recorded history have recurrently threatened its national existence.

Yet to its position as a battlefield for the races of the East and West, this mountainous plateau owes its ancient culture. Overrun by successive armies, it came to know the varied customs, arts, and philosophies of

the invading civilizations. Its destiny was eternal combat and absorption. The Armenians wisely gathered up what share they might of fallen treasure as they plodded the ways of a persecuted people.

Consequently their cultural and racial characteristics are partially derived from such races as the Hittites, the Assyrians, the Medes, the Parthians, Persians, Greeks and Macedonians, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Jews, and other Near Eastern races. Their language belongs to the Indo-European family and is intermediate between Indo-Iranian and Greek, but distinct from both.

Early history is indistinct in the fog of antiquity, but wavering outlines emerge. After the fall of Nineveh in 606 B.C. in which the Armenians took a prominent part on the side of the victorious Persians, the country enjoyed a short period of independence. The Medes, followed by the Persians, brought the country within their imperial domain until Alexander the Great wrested it from them and left it to his heirs, the Seleucids, who maintained a nominal suzerainty over Armenia for a century and a half. A new period of independence followed, and the country began to prosper economically and culturally.

Tigranes the Great (94-56 B.C.) extended the boundaries of Armenia as far as the Mediterranean, bringing under his domination Cappadocia, Cilicia, Syria, Northern Mesopotamia and a part of Persia, these territorial acquisitions expanding the nation to the greatest size it has ever known. In an alliance with Mithradates of Pontus he fought the Romans until defeated by Pompey, when Armenia was brought under the political influence of Rome. For more than four

centuries Armenia remained a buffer state between the Roman and Persian Empires.

King Tiridates' conversion to Christianity, and the establishment of Christianity as the religion of the nation—the first Christian state in the history of the world—brought the Armenians definitely to the side of the Europeans, as opposed to the Orientals. The Persians renewed their attacks but though conquering the Armenians politically they were unable to wean them from their new religion.

The struggle between Persia and the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire for supremacy over Armenia went on concurrently with the fight of the Armenians for religious freedom. In the seventh century a new factor entered the field. The religious movement started by Mohammed in Arabia (568-632) had not only electrified the dormant desert but had implanted a new zeal in the Arabian tribes to spread their new religion by fire and sword throughout the world. Armenia came under their domination in the middle of the seventh century and for over two hundred years was governed by henchmen of the Caliph. In 836 one of the native princes was proclaimed king by the consent of the Caliph and the Byzantine Emperor, thus introducing a new period of independence for the country. This was brought to an abrupt end, however, by the short-sighted policy of the Byzantines, in the eleventh century. Ani, the capital of Armenia and its great cultural center, was sacked in 1064. The sudden appearance at this time of the Seljuk Turks, a warring tribe of Mongols from Central Asia, presaged the future domination of the Near East by Asiatic forces.

The Seljuk invasion resulted in a great migration of Armenians toward the west. Many found their way as far as Poland and Galicia in Europe. Some of the nobility crossed the Taurus range and made their homes in Cilicia, where they soon established an independent kingdom. This coincided with the arrival of the Crusaders who found in the Armenians natural allies fighting for a common cause — Christianity — against common enemies — the Arabs, followers of Mohammed. Through the Crusades the Armenians were brought into close contact with Europe and its people. The Cilician kingdom was overthrown in 1375 by the Mameluk Arabs of Egypt. Soon after, the Ottoman Turks established their empire in Asia Minor, bringing under their rule Armenia, Cilicia, Syria, Mesopotamia, northern Africa and southeastern Europe.

For more than five hundred years the Armenians lived under Turkish rule, and yet maintained their national solidarity under the guidance of their clergy. The status of the Armenians as a politico-religious body was officially recognized by the Turkish sultans after the capture of Constantinople in 1453, when all Christian communities were given absolute authority in all matters which did not come under the jurisdiction of Moslem religious law. An Armenian bishop, Hovakim, was appointed Patriarch of Constantinople by an imperial irade (decree) and was recognized by the Sublime Porte as the political as well as the ecclesiastical leader of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire.

From the fourteenth to the nineteenth centuries the Armenians settled, propagated and thrived in the cities and hamlets throughout the far-flung Ottoman

Empire in Asia, the Caucasus, and in Persia. In the principal cities they occupied important positions as bankers, traders, alchemists, architects, surgeons, herbalists, silver-smiths, gem-cutters, lens-grinders, makers of vestments and altar-pieces, carvers of wood and ivory. Thriving brotherhoods of craftsmen—taking on the form of family guilds, of which vestiges still survive—sprang up among saddle-makers, rug and silk weavers, drug-dryers, lace-makers, and embroiderers. The caravan routes of Asia carried their handicraft to the seaports and thence to the far corners of the civilized world. In the little villages, however, the peasants remained simple tillers of the soil.

The nineteenth century, which brought the beginning of the disintegration of the mighty Ottoman Empire, witnessed the turning point in the fate of the Armenian nation. The liberation of Greece, the wave of liberalism in Europe, and the growing power of Russia encouraged in the subject races of Turkey aspirations for national independence. The decision of the American mission to open operations in Turkey in the first half of the century coincided with the cultural renaissance of the Armenians, which eventually resulted in the birth of a strong nationalistic movement and the rise of revolutionary organizations, whose aim was the liberation of Armenia from the yoke of the Sultans.

Early in the century Russia had already foreshadowed its future activities in the destiny of the Armenian people by annexing the Plain of Ararat from Persia, and was making no effort to conceal its intention of overrunning Turkish Armenia and realizing the dream of a Russian Constantinople. The Russo-

Turkish War of 1878 brought fruition to the intent and almost realized the dream. The Russian armies swept over Armenia occupying the Provinces of Batum, Ardahan, Kars and Erzerum. Another army of the Czar was about to enter Constantinople, when the Sultan's government sued for peace. The ensuing Treaty of San Stefano made the Czar a guardian of the Armenians in Turkey. Turkey was compelled to introduce reforms in the Armenian provinces and to guarantee their safety against the attacks of Kurds and Circassians.

This arrangement was superseded by the Treaty of Berlin, 1878, in which, because of British insistence, a like assurance of protection was given over the signatures of the six powers negotiating that treaty. Secretly, however, Great Britain had made another treaty with Turkey known as the Convention of Cyprus "for the protection of Christians and other subjects of the Porte" in Asia Minor. Turkey permitted British occupancy of Cyprus so long as Russia should continue to occupy Kars, Ardahan, and Batum. By the theoretically beneficent Convention of Cyprus, which was generally assumed to place the Armenians under British protection, the oppression of this long-suffering people was actually prolonged and intensified. Great Britain, not keenly interested in their plight, would yet allow no Russian intervention. Russia, regarding the Armenians solely as instruments of British anti-Russian policy, behaved with frank hostility, and attempted to prohibit the use of the Armenian language within her possessions, to close the native schools, and to confiscate all property of the

Armenian church. Armenian resistance, fostered by the Dashnag Party, frustrated these attempts.

The feared attack by the Kurds, against which both the Convention and the Treaty had ostensibly offered protection, occurred in 1894. A comparatively small affray, resisted by Armenians, took a serious aspect when Abdul-Hamid sent troops to quell the Armenian "rebellion." An investigation by hostile Turkish and Russian authorities and indifferent British and French representatives resulted in presentation to the Sultan of a plan of reforms among his Armenian subjects and acceptance by him under pressure in October, 1895. Almost as he signed his name to this pronunciamento, the Sultan gave the word for massacres to begin, and about 300,000 Armenians were slaughtered in the provinces.

Neither Russia nor England lived up to their contract for protecting the Armenians. Security of life and property for Armenians remained in the same precarious condition even after the Revolution of the "Young Turks" brought forth the Constitution of 1908, which guaranteed to them, as well as to other minority groups in Turkey, equality with the Turks. Before the first anniversary of the Young Turk regime nearly 30,000 Armenians were massacred in Cilicia.

The World War saw the grim climax of the Turko-Armenian relations. Armenians were driven from their homes en masse and forced to march to the Syrian desert. Those of military age were conscripted, and brutally shot in batches of hundreds and sometimes thousands. The leaders were exiled and executed. The remaining population, composed mostly of women and children, with a sprinkling of elderly men, undertook

the long journey under harrowing conditions. Many perished on the way. Children and young girls were snatched from their parents and given to faithful followers of Mohammed. Those who arrived at their destination in the desert were subjected to several organized massacres in which more than a quarter of a million survivors fell as victims. Privation and pestilence completed the work of extermination. At least one million Armenians perished during the World War, this number being approximately one-half the total Armenian population in Turkey.

The fate of the Armenians under Russian rule was far different. They fought in the Czar's armies and even organized an army of volunteers to fight against their mortal enemy, the Turk. The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and the subsequent collapse of Russian armed forces found them defending their homes against the Turkish army. Finally peace was made and an Armenian state emerged as an independent political unit in May, 1918.

With the end of the World War the Allies attempted to fix the boundaries of the New Armenian Republic. The Treaty of Sevres added some Turkish territory to the new state and President Wilson was requested to decide the new boundary line between Turkey and Armenia, which he did. But the nationalistic movement of the Turks under Mustapha Kemal Pasha succeeded in driving the Greeks from Asia Minor and scrapping the Treaty of Sevres. The Armenian Republic fought unsuccessfully against Kemal's Army in 1920. This defeat and the resultant chaos gave the Armenian Communists the opportunity to seize control of Armenia. In November of that year

a Soviet Socialist Republic was created with an area of about 17,000 square miles.

Today the Armenian territory is divided into three parts. Its eleven pre-war provinces are subject to Turkey, Persia and the Soviet Union. Turkey rules the provinces, or vilayets, of Van, Bitlis, Erzerum, Diarbekir, Sivas, Mamuret-ul-Aziz, known as Turkish Armenia, province of Cilicia, called Lesser Armenia, and the province of Kars. The province of Erivan, and the eastern portion of Elizabetopol form part of the Soviet Union. In 1922 Azerbaijan and Georgia were united with the Armenian Soviet Republic to form the Transcaucasian S. F. S. Republic. However, the Soviet Constitution of 1936 dissolved the Federation and established Armenia as one of the constituent independent republics.

At the present time a united, free, and sovereign Armenia exists only as a dream for her nationals. Though some millions of people continue to call themselves Armenians, and national self-consciousness may linger for generations to come, the unification of the Armenian people in a single national state remains an unrealized aspiration.

II

FROM MT. ARARAT TO MASSACHUSETTS

Early Migrations

At the time of Columbus's discovery of the New World migration was already an old habit with the Armenians. Close contact with the Byzantines had long ago attracted many Armenians to Constantinople and other parts of the Eastern Roman Empire, where they had carved for themselves great careers as generals, as statesmen and even as emperors. The invasions of Central Asiatics in the eleventh century, which put an end to the Armenian kingdom, forced many Armenians to seek their fortunes in foreign lands. Some went to the East and established colonies in Tartary; many crossed into Byzantine territory; another large group sought refuge in Europe via the Crimea, the Ukraine, Moldovia and Poland, later penetrating into Hungary, the Italian city states and Holland. It is recorded that at one time there was an Armenian colony of 200,000 persons in Poland, enjoying a semi-autonomous status, with churches and schools centered chiefly in the province and the city of Lwow (Lemberg).

The fall of the Cilician kingdom likewise compelled many Armenians to seek their fortunes in more hospitable countries. As living conditions in their native land became more intolerable, Armenian emigrants spread further in many directions and formed colonies or communities in India, Egypt, northern

Caucasus and the Balkan States. In India they rose to great wealth and influence, enjoying privileges reserved usually for Englishmen only.

In these migratory movements the name of one person in particular stands out for his influence upon the cultural history of the Armenian race. This was Mekhitar of Sabastia, who, fired with the zeal of bringing a cultural rebirth to his nation, and foreseeing the unsurmountable difficulties for his plan under the Turkish rule, had the inspiring thought of establishing a center for the Armenians in a European country. He succeeded in receiving the patronage of the Pope at Rome for the founding of a monastery in Venice. This institution, known as the Mekhitarist Monastery of St. Lazar, became a focal point of learning, and is to this day one of the cultural centers of Armenians. A branch of the Mekhitarists was later established in Vienna and both institutions have fully justified the hopes of the founder.

Even though Armenians continued to migrate to foreign lands after the discovery of the New World, they seemed to be unaware of the existence of the western hemisphere. At the beginning of the 19th century the name of America was virtually unknown to Armenians in their native land. Save for certain individual migrations, such as that of "Martin the Armenian" who was a member of the Colony of Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619, there is no record of any Armenian immigration to the United States prior to 1831. However, the decision of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to extend their activities into Turkey affected the destiny of thousands of Armenians.

When the first three American missionaries arrived in Constantinople in 1831, they found the Turks and other people of Moslem faith impossible to convert, and soon directed their efforts toward making Protestants of the already Christian Armenians. This contact stimulated immigration into the United States. It also made a rift in Armenian unity. Without freedom, without their own government, the Armenians had retained their consciousness of national identity through unity in their unique Christian faith. Upon this unity religious schism to some degree impinged—perhaps not, however, to a degree sufficient to offset greatly the glory of new horizons opened before eyes long accustomed to a restricted outlook.

First Settlers

It has been estimated that as late as 1870 there were only 69 Armenians in the United States. Most of these had settled permanently at their port of entry, New York City, but a few had ventured as far as Boston and Worcester. American missionaries in Turkey sent young Armenians to study at American colleges, and thus paved the way for further immigration. The first Armenian in Worcester is said to have come to America because of missionary influence. The Reverend George C. Knapp, on leave of absence from his duties in Turkey, came to the Massachusetts city for a brief stay about the year 1867. He brought with him his Armenian servant, a man named Garo or Garabed, who was to receive in America his accustomed monthly remuneration of seventy-five cents. The Irish laundress in the house opened Garo's eyes when she told him he could exceed that amount daily

in the factories of Worcester. He left his domestic employment and found work in the wire mill which was later to employ many of his countrymen.

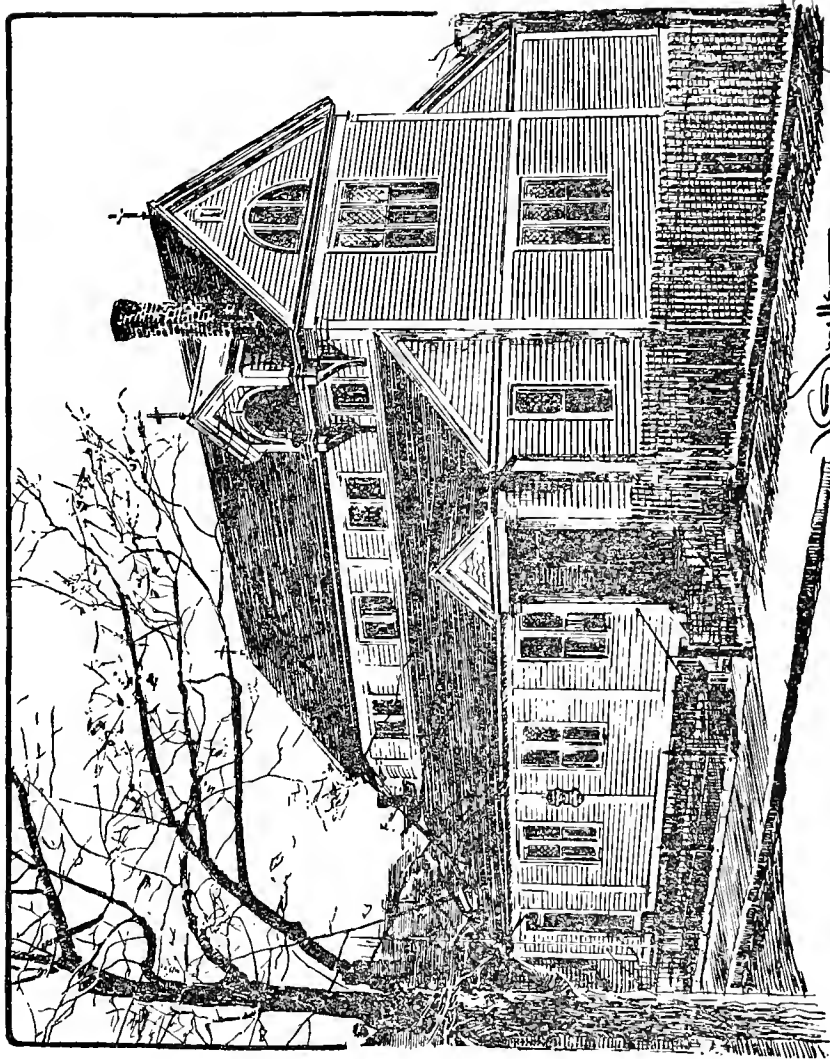
Garo and other Armenians who reached America during this period wrote enthusiastic letters to their friends and relatives in Armenia, and so stimulated immigration that by 1880 there were 40 Armenians in Massachusetts, about half of them in Worcester and Millbury and the remainder in Metropolitan Boston. An early immigrant to Massachusetts writing in the Armenian daily, "Baikar," states that when he reached Boston in 1885 he found nine Armenians in the city—two students, a well-known artist, a rug merchant, a storekeeper, a copper worker, a machinist, a jewelry worker, and his wife, the first Armenian woman in Boston. This number was evidently soon increased, for in 1889, when certain Worcester Armenians wrote to the Armenian Patriarch at Constantinople stressing their need for a spiritual leader, they said, "There are three hundred Armenians in Worcester, and about four hundred scattered in New York, Boston, Jersey City and Philadelphia." This same year found in Lawrence two Armenians who had migrated from Worcester, the pioneers in a future Lawrence community of over a thousand members.

It was not, however, until the last decade of the 19th century that Armenian immigration began in earnest. The long slumbering fires of religious fanaticism and race hatred were fanned to a white heat. Political persecution and the wholesale massacre of Armenians by Turks in 1894 and 1896 gave added impetus to migratory impulses, and Armenians set forth in droves for America, in an attempt to escape

persecution and to ameliorate their economic condition. They came from every village and town in Armenia, as well as from other sections of Turkey where large Armenian communities had been established before and during the Turkish occupation. The greatest number, however, came from the province of Harpoot in Central Armenia, and today a large majority of Armenians in Massachusetts trace their origin to that province. The annual reports of the United States Commissioner of Immigration show that, while the total number of immigrants from Turkey for the period from 1834 to 1894 was 9,472, half of whom were in all probability Armenians, immigrants from Turkey during the next four years (1895-1898) numbered 15,913. These reports also show that Massachusetts was, next to New York State, the favorite destination of Armenian immigrants from 1899 to 1917, New York receiving 32% of them, Massachusetts 26%, and Rhode Island less than 10%.

From 1899 to 1907 there was a halt in the exodus of Armenians to America. During this period the Turkish government forbade the emigration of Armenians, and it was therefore not until 1908, when a new constitutional government was established which gave them freedom to travel, that immigration was resumed. The chief motive for leaving at this time was improvement of economic status.

Save for scattered instances of men who came to America either to engage in commerce or to study at American schools and universities, the new-comers were recruited not from the wealthy groups but from the poorer classes who were largely peasants and artisans. These people had early developed in their native



Sourp Prgich (Church of our Saviour): Worcester
The First Armenian Church in America

land the custom of leaving their families at home while they traveled to large cities, there to remain until they had amassed sufficient wealth with which to return to their native habitat. It was no uncommon occurrence for a young husband to leave his wife soon after their marriage and return to find himself the father of an adult son or daughter. Occasionally such travelers would secure good positions in their new abode, and send for their families with the idea of permanent settlement. In the average case, however, the husband would return after a span of years.

It was therefore natural that when the early Armenian immigrant came to America, his motive was to seek his fortune and then rejoin his family in his native land. He merely substituted New York for Constantinople, a city steadily growing less safe for Armenian residence and less productive of profitable employment. The ratio of male to female immigrants during this period averaged about five or six to one. Because they did not intend to make America their permanent home and were not very particular as to the occupations they chose, they entered the factories, where they worked long hours for low wages. They had no class consciousness, took no interest in labor unions, and showed no dissatisfaction with their working conditions. Their lack of knowledge concerning American labor traditions and habits made them appear hostile in the eyes of American workers and for some time they were apt to find themselves targets for stones and derogatory epithets. However, with them life in America was but a question of a few years of concentrated endeavor; looking toward their return home with money in their pockets, they cared little what

hardship and privation they endured in the meantime.

Somehow or other, the plan did not work out as they had intended it should. After a few years' stay in America, their eyes were opened to the ease and comfort which the average resident of the new country enjoyed, and they saw the greater opportunity for advancement which America afforded. Many applied themselves with renewed energy to their occupations, that they might become skilled workers. Married men sent for their families and bachelors selected prospective brides from proffered photographs.

The Last Influx

Armenian immigration to the United States received a great impetus in 1908 when the new Turkish Constitution gave the Armenians the privilege of leaving the country freely. While up to that time the majority of the Armenian immigrants had been peasants or unskilled workers, now skilled workers, tradesmen, students and professional men began to seek their fortunes in the New World.

During the War years, 1914-1918, Armenian immigration ceased almost completely. Excepting a few occasional refugees who found their way out of Turkey and arrived here through the help of their relatives or friends in this country, no Armenians were permitted to leave Turkey. With the cessation of hostilities, however, most American Armenians sent for the survivors of their families until the new United States laws restricted the flow of all immigration.

Mustapha Kemal's nationalist movement gave rise to a new mass migration of Armenians from Turkey. Thousands of families fled into Syria, Greece,

Egypt, Cyprus and France. A few succeeded in entering the United States, especially those members of the families of American citizens who were exempt from the immigration laws.

These and others who managed to enter the country during the period from 1920 to 1931 numbered 26,146, of whom 4,770 came to Massachusetts. The years 1920 and 1924 represent the beginning and the end of this last inrush of Armenian immigrants to the United States. The totals for these years were 2,762 and 2,940, respectively. Of these 1,296 were females in 1920, and 1,714 in 1924. Of the 1,466 males (children included) in 1920, 93 were professional men and 383 were skilled workers; in 1924 out of 1,226 (children included) 434 were skilled workers and 197 were members of some profession. A comparison of statistics for immigrants from European countries to the United States during these years shows that the proportion of professional and skilled people among the Armenians was one of the highest.

With the establishment of the Kemalist regime in Turkey all Armenians in this country definitely abandoned their intention of returning to their native land. The new Turkish political policy entirely exterminating Armenian influence made them realize that permanent settlement in the United States was their salvation. With this realization came the necessity of reorganizing their lives. Many invested their savings, formerly kept liquid. Most of this money was now utilized for setting up small businesses; some went toward building and buying homes. Unskilled workers began to aspire to better positions. A general desire to better their social condition awakened within them

as they learned to look upon America as their home.

Today, Bay State Armenians are located, for the most part, in eastern counties of the State. Worcester and Watertown have large communities, and Boston is the intellectual and cultural center. As a rule, they live at scattered points in the communities where they make their homes; for example, although there are 3,000 Armenians living in every part of Boston, that city has no "Armenian section."

The population is preponderantly urban, although there is a small rural colony at Methuen and some farmers may be found at scattered points throughout the State. However, those engaged in farming or living in rural districts constitute less than 1% of the entire group in Massachusetts.

It is difficult to ascertain the exact number of Armenians in various Massachusetts cities and towns. Since most of them come from Turkey, the United States census lists many of them as Turks. The following figures, based on the 1930 census together with estimates given by prominent members of the race, are, however, approximately correct:

Boston 3,000	Watertown 3,500	Cambridge 1,000
Worcester 4,500	Chelsea 1,500	Lawrence 1,000

In addition to these, there are communities numbering 100 or more in Lowell, Lynn, Haverhill, Whitinsville, Brockton, Milford, Springfield, Malden, Newton, Everett, Fitchburg, Medford, Arlington, Newburyport, Belmont, Somerville and Stoneham.

The census for 1930 lists 15,000 Armenians and about 8,000 Turks. Since about half those listed as Turks are probably Armenians, the total is about 19,000, with the majority settled in Metropolitan Boston.

III

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Occupational Pursuits

The social, educational, and economic status of the early Armenian settlers closed to them most of the means of earning a livelihood. Not only were they illiterate and unskilled but they were numerically too few to work in labor gangs. They therefore found their way into the factories as unskilled workers. The "wire mill," Moen and Washburn Manufacturing Company's Worcester plant, became the destination of Armenian immigrants in Massachusetts.

Handicapped by their ignorance of American customs and of the English language, the early Armenian immigrants were victimized by ruthless opportunists of their own race who served them as interpreters and guides. They lived under the most deplorable conditions. Fifteen, sometimes as many as twenty, men herded together in one dingy apartment, cooking their own meals, and depriving themselves of every conceivable luxury and enjoyment so that they might more quickly amass a fortune and return home.

Into such a group, living in Worcester in 1884, came Michael Tophanelian, an educated Armenian from Constantinople. Shocked by the picture presented by his unfortunate compatriots, Tophanelian at once began to champion their cause against unscrupulous interpreters and religious exploiters. Within four years he had succeeded in arousing sufficient interest among them to make possible the organization of the

Armenian Club, an institution which was to function as the cultural, educational, and religious center of Worcester Armenians. After a period of stormy controversy, the Club succeeded, in 1891, in obtaining a priest from Constantinople, and in erecting the first Armenian church on the American continent.

As their numbers grew they spread throughout the eastern half of the State, finding employment in the foundries of Whitinsville, Milford, and Millbury, in the shoe factories of Lynn, Brockton, Haverhill and Boston, and in the textile mills of Lawrence.

Upon such a foundation was the economic structure of the Armenians built. Ambition, constant industry, and the age-old ability to adjust themselves to new environment helped them take advantage of the new opportunities offered them. Although no Armenians have amassed great fortunes, they are on the whole comfortably well-to-do. Cases of extreme poverty are almost non-existent among them.

One of the major Armenian contributions to American commerce is the introduction of Oriental rugs. Armenian rug merchants have found their way into every important city of the Commonwealth. The first of these merchants, in Boston, was Hagop Boghigian, who settled in the city about 1885.

With the exception of these rug merchants, and a few others, no commercial figures of importance have emerged. There are, however, numerous small shop-keepers who deal in various commodities, such as groceries, confectioneries, clothing, etc.

They have made great strides in those fields requiring skilled labor. There are a large number of Armenians in the photo engraving craft, due chiefly

to the efforts of a Mr. Aznive, one of the earliest immigrants, who taught many of his compatriots this highly specialized work. Several photo engraving shops exist which are owned by Armenians. The Harvard Engraving Company of Boston is one of the best known, for it is the largest establishment of its kind in New England. The number of skilled workers in other fields is not very large, although they are fairly well represented in the manufacturing industries, particularly in the production of shoes, candy, ice-cream, jewelry, and clothing. There are also several cleaning and dyeing plants and rug cleaning establishments owned and operated by Armenians.

An interesting enterprise is a factory at Norfolk Downs for the manufacture of cymbals, owned by the Ziljians, who for ten generations have been engaged in making these musical instruments. The formula for the alloy employed in the manufacture of cymbals has been a family secret of the Ziljians, and they have been able to keep that secret since 1603, when they started the business in Constantinople. The Massachusetts plant was established in 1928.

A deep love of education is characteristic of the Armenian people. It has led many of them into the professions, and scores of Armenian physicians, surgeons, and dentists are scattered throughout the State. Every good-sized community in the State has its quota of Armenian lawyers, and there are Armenian teachers and professors within the institutions of learning throughout the Commonwealth. One may also find here Armenian clergymen, editors, authors, social workers, engineers, architects, musicians, artists and inventors.

The career of Dr. Varazted Kazanjian, the world-famous plastic surgeon, is typical of Armenian aspiration and perseverance. He came to this country in 1895 and like many of his compatriots found his way to Worcester and its wire mill. He started at a salary of ninety cents per week. Gradually his pay increased and he began to save part of his earnings for an education, not forgetting, in the meantime, to send aid to his parents in the old country. After toiling for seven years in this fashion and utilizing all his spare time for study he entered the Harvard Dental School. His savings being insufficient, he worked at odd jobs until he was graduated in 1906. Because of his record as a student, he was immediately appointed as an instructor at the school.

The World War gave him his chance to demonstrate his skill in plastic surgery. Joining the Harvard Medical Unit in 1915, he served in the British Army with the rank of major. His work was soon recognized and his fame spread throughout the world as a "miracle surgeon," who could reconstruct shattered faces.

Today fame and wealth have in no way affected his zeal and his modesty. He works long hours in his Boston laboratory, teaches at the Harvard Dental School and spends some of his time in the Massachusetts General Hospital. At the Harvard Dental School, there stands, as a tribute to him, an exhibition of his great work as a surgeon and humanitarian.

Among the inventors the name of Garabed Giragosian became sensational news for the newspapers during the World War period. His claim to an invention known as "Free Energy Motor" was for a while

hailed as a revolutionary step for production of power without power. Even the United States Congress considered the invention seriously and appointed a committee of experts to investigate its workability. Mr. Giragosian, who is a resident of Boston, claims to this day that his invention is sound and that Congress finally refused to accept it for other reasons.

Another Armenian inventor, A. Q. Derbab of Lynn, is well known in that city. Derbab's primary interest has always been in perfecting equipment for transportation. This urge has been with him since young manhood, when in Sivas, Asia Minor, he fashioned by hand the first bicycle that ever traversed his native soil. When bicycles weighed on an average of 175 pounds, he designed one that weighed only 25 pounds, and reduced even that, through improvements, to 19 pounds.

In the hope of selling this light wheel to the public he went to Colonel Pope, a bicycle manufacturer of Hartford, Conn., at his Boston office. Before the door he gave an exhibition of cycling antics that astonished the colonel, the factory workers, and the bystanders. Pope's engineers, however, feared such a radical mechanism, and warned him that were he to sell such a bicycle, he would run the risk of countless liability suits. He heeded their advice and Derbab returned to Lynn, disappointed. From decade to decade he saw the bicycle slowly reduce in weight, until it finally became standard at approximately thirty pounds. More business-like minds had triumphed over his genius, although he still created special hand-made cycles for road work or racing, at a price of \$250. In 1892 he placed an engine on a three-wheel bicycle,

which would travel between 50 to 65 miles on a gallon of gasoline, carrying two passengers—a valuable consideration when the fuel was 75¢ a gallon.

The disputes arising from “close-finish” horse races stimulated the ingenuity of Capt. G. Harry Adalian, a Boston rug merchant, to perfect a high speed camera which has eliminated some of the doubts. In 1936 the Futurity Foto-Finish camera was first used at Suffolk Downs in Massachusetts, and is now used exclusively at many of the country’s leading race tracks.

Armenians take no prominent part in the political life of Massachusetts. Mr. George Kurzon of Uxbridge, who in 1934 was elected to the General Court of Massachusetts, was an exception. They have attained no position of importance in state or civic government. Of late years, however, various political organizations have come into being, either under the auspices of major political parties or as non-partisan units. In Watertown, Worcester, and Boston there are both Democratic and Republican Clubs. Arlington has a well organized Citizens’ Club among its Armenian residents, and a similar non-partisan unit has been active in the political affairs of Dorchester.

Philanthropic and Cultural Societies

The foremost philanthropic organization of the Armenians is the A.G.B.U. (Armenian General Benevolent Union). Founded in Egypt in 1905 by Boghos Nubar Pasha with the co-operation of several wealthy Armenians, it has spread throughout the world. Its educational and charitable activities are directed by a

board of trustees with headquarters in Paris, although the Union is chartered by the Swiss Government.

The first American branch of this society was formed in Boston in 1910 through the efforts of Mr. Vahan Kurkjian, a man of literary and scholarly attainments, who had been sent to this country to enroll Armenians in the A.G.B.U. Boston was the headquarters for all the American branches for many years until the transfer to New York. At present there are branches in almost every Armenian community in the Commonwealth. Among leaders of long standing in this society are Dr. M. G. Yardum, Dr. Charles Calusdian, and Mr. H. Selian, all of Boston, and Mr. Maghak Berberian of Worcester. A junior organization for members of the younger generation of both sexes was formed and has been functioning since 1927.

Known as "Hoc" to the Armenians, The Committee to Aid Armenia is a branch of an organization of similar name in Soviet Armenia. This Committee formed in 1925 to give material aid for the economic rehabilitation of Armenia has become a link between the Soviet government and the Armenians in this country and has been instrumental in sending monetary as well as material aid to Armenia.

Of the women's organizations, the Armenian Women's Welfare Association, known among them as "Azkanuer Hayouhyatz," is the only purely charitable society concerned solely with local Armenians. Founded in Boston twenty-five years ago, it has given valuable aid and solace to needy Armenians in Greater Boston. One of its major aims is the establishment of a home for aged Armenians.

The Armenian Relief Corps is the name given to the old Armenian Red Cross. It is an adjunct of the Dashnagist party, with its membership composed of the women-folk of its members and their sympathizers. The Central Executive Committee of this organization, with branches throughout the United States and other countries, is located in Boston. This society contributes to educational and philanthropic enterprises in Armenian communities in foreign countries.

The Daughters of Armenia are under the direct supervision of the Red Cross of Soviet Armenia. They contribute medical supplies, surgical instruments and other gifts of a similar nature to the hospitals of Armenia.

In addition to these, there are numerous small organizations in the State which were formed in pre-war days for the purpose of establishing and maintaining schools in various cities and villages in Armenia. When these communities were wiped out during the war, these societies found themselves unable to pursue their original aims. Since then they have for the most part become committees for reconstruction. They plan to build up new towns, or at least quarters, in Armenia, in commemoration of their birthplaces, and to help their expatriated townsmen return to their native land from foreign countries in which they have lived as refugees for the past fifteen years.

The Armenian Students' Association, a nationwide society composed of students and ex-students, came into existence in Boston in 1910. High school, college and university students and graduates are now admitted. The activities include occasional lectures,

plays presented in Armenian, social gatherings, banquets, and dances, whose proceeds go to aid needy students. The Armenian Scientific Association, organized in 1936, recruits its members from the ranks of college-educated Armenians. The Armenian Historical Society was established the same year to preserve records and other relics of significance to the group in Massachusetts.

Although not Armenian organizations, the International Institutes of Boston and Lawrence have done much to aid members of this group in many phases of living. In this work Miss Olympia Yeranian and Mrs. Marie Chobanian have taken prominent parts. Mrs. Arousiak Barseghian, a graduate of Constantinople Women's College, has rendered similar service for Armenians through the Family Welfare Society of Boston.

Sports and Recreation

Due to the political tyranny of foreign rulers who looked with suspicion upon any gathering of their young people, no matter for what purpose, the Armenians had no national sports. Ancient historians speak of Olympiads modeled somewhat upon the Greek pattern, but these were forgotten when Armenia lost its independence. Not until the Turkish Constitution of 1908 did the Armenians as a people show interest in sports which were importations from western countries. An organization called the Armenian General Athletic Union came into existence in Constantinople, the intellectual center of the Armenians in Turkey. Athletic field days and Olympiads

were held until the advent of the World War, when the Turkish cruelties put a quick stop to these activities.

With the close of the War a revival of interest began to manifest itself. Soccer football became the most popular game and soccer teams were organized in various localities. The nationalist movement of Mustapha Kemal, however, soon ended this movement.

Games played by pupils of Armenian schools in their native towns were not of a uniform nature. Each community played according to local customs. The only universal game seemed to be "Prisoners of War." It was played on a rectangular field by two opposing teams, each having its "camp" at the field's extremities. At the right or left hand corner in front of each camp was the "concentration camp" where captured prisoners of war were to be kept. The game's object was to capture all or the majority of the opposing team as prisoners. Such games are sometimes played here at outings, but in general the public has lost all interest in them.

The American-born generation knows practically nothing of the sports of their fathers. Their interest is in American sports, and with few exceptions they seem to have excelled in football alone. As far back as 1920 Mike Gulian of Newton was captain of the Brown University football team and later a tackle on the official All American Football Team. Zing Surabian of Medford and Williams College, and Ed Kevorkian of Newton and Brown University, were picked on the All Eastern Team in 1926 and 1929.

Lowell's Vahan Moushegian established an enviable record in both football and basketball while at

Harvard, and Johnny Adzigian of Stoneham, attending the same college, was prominent in football, baseball, and basketball.

Others who have attracted attention in athletic circles are Ira Jivelikian of Boston College, Alex Kevorkian of Harvard, Ara Karakashian of Bowdoin College, Morris Adraian of Springfield College, and Norair Hagopian of Northeastern.

The only girl who has become prominent in sports is Margaret Nigohosian of Whitinsville. Because of her proficiency in soft ball, volley ball and track activities, Miss Nigohosian was recently appointed head coach of the Boston Park Department for field hockey.

After the World War an attempt was made to organize branches of the Armenian General Athletic Union in several cities where there were large Armenian communities. For more than ten years a Boston branch remained active by participating in soccer, basketball and baseball. It was, however, dissolved three years ago, and an effort is now being made to revive it. Other organizations have made sporadic attempts to establish competitive teams.

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation Tzeghagron Society is including athletic activities in its program. According to the athletic council of this organization, located at Springfield, Mass., their activities are on a nation-wide scale. The sports sponsored are baseball, basketball, soccer, and track and field meets. Approximately 520 members participate in these activities. Of these baseball claims 120, basketball 350, soccer 50, track and field 110.

IV

THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT

Patriotic Organizations

While the Armenians were engaged in developing their social and religious life in Massachusetts, a new movement was making its appearance among their people in Turkey and elsewhere. The wave of liberalism which swept over Europe during the middle of the nineteenth century was not without effect upon the Armenians of Constantinople and of Smyrna, since it led the Sultan to grant them a charter as a religious-political community. A literary and educational renaissance ensued, bringing in its wake a revival of national consciousness and a desire to liberate Armenia from Turkish oppression. This agitation, fostered largely by Russian Armenians, brought into being two political organizations, which functioned as secret revolutionary societies. The Hunchagist Party, and a few years later the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (A.R.F.), commonly called the Dashnag Party, enrolled patriotic Armenians under their banners and advocated the liberation of Armenia through open revolution.

Although both organizations professed the same aim—liberation of Armenia—and advocated the same means—revolution against Turkish government—and both had accepted Socialism and were affiliated with the International Socialist Movement, it was not possible to unite them into a single organization. The Dashnag leaders had formed their organization with

the intent of bringing all patriotic bodies into one unit, as was implied in their original name—The Federation of Armenian Revolutionaries. As attempts to unite the revolutionists failed, they solidified their own ranks and entered into a rivalry with the older party. They organized branches throughout Russian Armenia, where they soon became the dominant party.

The Hunchagist Society, organized in Russian Armenia in 1888, was the first to make its appearance in Massachusetts. Simultaneously, in 1890, branches opened at Boston and Worcester. It had ramifications throughout Turkish Armenia, European Turkey, the Caucasus, and in other countries where Armenian communities existed. In 1896 the party split into two factions, and a new organization, the Reformed Hunchagists, became the dominant political unit. In 1907, a new rift weakened its position and gave rise to a fourth political organization, the Constitutional Democratic party.

These revolutionary societies exerted a profound influence upon Armenians in America. They became potent factors in the intellectual development of the Armenian immigrant. Public meetings, lectures and discussions, even study groups, became the order of the day. Newspapers, books and pamphlets published by the two parties made all who cared to read conversant not only with their own national problems but with happenings throughout the world. Many illiterates learned to read and write solely through the influence of these patriotic societies.

A number of leaders worked ardently for the creation and development of this patriotic movement. Some have since passed away, others have left the

State or country, but a few are still actively engaged in the service of their compatriots. Among the first of these was Garabed Papazian, a native of Caesaria, Turkey, who came to Massachusetts in 1886 as a student. After a year spent at Springfield, Massachusetts, he entered Harvard University. Papazian did much to acquaint Americans with the Armenian people and to enlist their aid in the service of his countrymen. It was through his efforts that "The Friends of Armenia," a society which numbered among its members such notable liberals of the period as Julia Ward Howe, Alice Stone Blackwell, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, William Lloyd Garrison, Rev. Charles Gordon Ames, Edward H. Clement of the "Boston Transcript," and Rollo Ogden, was formed in Boston.

Karekin Chuljian, another early leader, though an ordained minister of the gospel, left the church and joined the Hunchagist Society. Chuljian had early in life experienced and resented Turkish domination of his people. He migrated to America, and arrived in New York in 1892 as a political refugee. Invited by the Armenian Protestant congregation of Worcester to be its pastor, he was soon obliged to resign that post, for his revolutionary doctrines did not meet with the approval of American missionary leaders. From then on, Chuljian devoted himself to the Hunchagist cause, willingly suffering bitter privation. He dared go on a mission to the Caucasus despite warnings of a plot to assassinate him, and when he landed at Odessa, in 1903, he met the fate he had not hesitated to confront, gladly sacrificing his life for the cause he had held sacred.

In 1899 the executive committee of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, located in Switzerland,



Karekin Chutjian
(1863-1903)



Arshak Vramian
(1871-1915)



sent Arshak Vramian to Massachusetts. The Federation, coming upon the scene a little late, found the American field already dominated by the Reformed Hunchagist Society, and under Vramian, a tireless worker and able propagandist, set about recruiting what members it could under its standard. Making his headquarters in Boston, Vramian used almost superhuman efforts to strengthen his organization. He edited the newly established weekly organ, "Hairenik"; he went from city to city addressing groups of Armenians and forming new branches of his society; he managed the affairs of his organization in the entire country. When the Reformed Hunchagists engaged in internal strife in 1906, Vramian, with his now perfected machine, was able to bring the A.R.F., or the Dashnag Party, to a position of leadership. To this day it remains the most efficiently organized Armenian political unit in the United States. Vramian, however, left the country in 1907, returned to Turkey after the so-called revolution of 1908, and after being elected to the Turkish Parliament from Van, was killed by the Turks in 1915.

The Armenian National Union

The social development of Armenians in Massachusetts on racial lines reached its highest form during the World War, when their compatriots in Turkey were in danger of annihilation. As soon as formal declarations of war were exchanged among the Great Powers, the Armenians all over the world realized the dire consequences which this cataclysm would have upon their fate as a nation. The issue was clear-cut for them from the very beginning: they were on the

side of those who spoke of the "rights of small nations." Even before the entry of the Turks into the great conflict the Armenians of Massachusetts, assuming the leadership in the United States, were deliberating about their future course for aiding their people within the confines of the Turkish Empire.

In September, 1914, the first attempt for harmonious action was made when the four political organizations formed an inter-party council. The prelacy in the meantime was negotiating with the Imperial Russian Embassy in Washington for permission from the Czar's government for the voluntary enlistment of United States Armenians to fight on the side of the Russian Army. The leaders of the Benevolent Union organized the "Committee for the Defense of the Armenian Interests" to work under the direction of the Armenian National Delegation in Paris. This latter body had come into existence because of the appointment of Boghos Nubar Pasha, an Egyptian-Armenian statesman of great reputation, as the diplomatic representative of the Catholicos of all the Armenians.

After protracted negotiations the Armenian National Defense Committee of America was formed. It was composed of representatives from each of the four political parties, and from the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Armenian Protestant Church, and the Armenian General Benevolent Union.

Friction between the various groups brought dissension within the Committee and resulted in separate action by the several organizations. Later all political parties sent detachments of volunteers to the Caucasus to fight against the Turks on the side of the Russian Armies. They also collected funds for food, clothing

and medical supplies to be sent to aid the thousands of Armenian refugees who were pouring into Russian territory from over the Turkish border.

These activities subsided in 1916, but a new field was opened by the consummation of an agreement between the Armenian National Delegation of Paris and the French government. The latter had consented to the formation of a military unit, composed of Ottoman subjects of Armenian and Syrian origin. This unit was to fight against the oppressors of their respective races and for the liberation of their people from the Turkish yoke. The Armenians and the Syrians were to supply volunteers who were to be known as the "Legion d'Orient" and to be trained and manned by French officers. All further care and expenses were to be assumed by the French government.

The plan had already been put into practice in Egypt and the first battalion of the Legion was organized at the beginning of the third year of war. It was composed of Armenian refugees in Egypt, mostly survivors of the heroic fighters of Musa Dagh, and of Armenian prisoners of war captured by the British in Mesopotamia and Palestine.

The Egyptian Armenians had given their unstinted co-operation and had formed a central directing body, the Armenian National Union, composed of political and religious organizations. In order to organize the Armenians of the United States along the same lines, a delegation was sent from Egypt direct to Boston, where it was enthusiastically received. After several conferences with leaders of the various factions, a National Union of American Armenians, patterned on the Egyptian model, was created. The

National Union comprised three representatives each from the four political parties, the two religious organizations and the Benevolent Union. Mr. Miran Sevasly, a Boston attorney, was chosen as chairman of the Executive Committee of the Union with offices in the Old South Building. A three-point plan of action was formulated:

1. Liberation of Armenia
2. Relief for refugees and war victims and reconstruction of Armenia
3. Dissemination of propaganda

Branches were organized throughout the State and the country and the recruiting of volunteers was begun.

The response was great. Many persons left jobs and flocked to Boston and New York to be among the first to enlist. But transportation facilities to France were hard to obtain and of the thousands of Armenians who had expressed their desire to volunteer, only a few could be accommodated. These sailed to France on passports supplied them by the "Union" and from there were sent to the island of Cyprus for training.

The number of volunteers who succeeded in reaching France totalled 1172, of whom 424 were from Massachusetts. The city of Lawrence, with an Armenian community of little over one thousand, gave seventy-eight volunteers, Worcester supplied seventy-six, and Boston sixty. These volunteers took a prominent part in General Allenby's final offensive against the Turks in Palestine in the fall of 1918.

For the second point of its program the Armenian National Union collected nearly one million dollars, of which one-fourth was contributed by Massachusetts.

Here, too, the Lawrence group topped the list with ten per cent of the Massachusetts total. The funds were distributed through the Armenian Patriarch in Constantinople, the Armenian Reconstruction Committee of Tiflis, the American Relief Committee, and the Russian-American Relief Association. Most of the money collected by the National Union was spent upon refugees, the total amount used for that purpose being \$503,000. For military purposes, \$210,000 was spent, and for propaganda, \$125,000.

These were not the only war contributions. In 1918 two large campaigns were started to raise funds. One of these was sponsored by General Antranig, the Armenian war hero, under the name of Liberty Fund; the other was undertaken by the A.R.F. for the benefit of the national army of the newly formed Armenian Republic. These campaigns succeeded in collecting over a half-million dollars each. In addition smaller campaigns undertaken by various organizations, and contributions through American relief agencies, made the total from Massachusetts Armenians an impressive amount.

There are no exact figures available, but it can be safely said that the Armenian colony of Massachusetts, numbering less than twenty thousand persons, gave more than one million dollars and nearly one thousand volunteers to the cause during the war.

The propaganda work of the Armenian National Union consisted of efforts to enlighten the American public and to win its sympathy. Besides sending its monthly organ to leaders in all walks of American life, the Committee helped to circulate books favorable to the Armenian cause. In this manner, the Blue Book

compiled by Lord Bryce under the title "Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 1915-16," was made accessible to many Americans, as were "Armenian Poems," by Alice Stone Blackwell; "The Tragedy of Armenia" by Berta Papazian; "Why Armenia Should Be Free," by Dr. G. Pasdermajian; and "The Armenians in America," by Vartan Malcom. To these must be added a number of pamphlets written by Americans and widely circulated through the efforts of the Committee.

The National Union was also instrumental in the formation of the Armenia-America Society, composed of prominent Americans who had avowed their friendship for the Armenian cause. This society included such men as Ambassador James Gerard, Senator King, Walter G. Smith, and many others.

With the entry of the United States into the War, activities of the Armenians received a new impetus. As they had cast their lot with the Allies from the very beginning, the American participation increased their hope and confidence of fair adjustment of their problems. The Armenian press exhorted Armenians who had not been naturalized not to claim exemption from military service because of their status as aliens and subjects of an unfriendly power (Turkey). Very few such claims were reported.

A committee was formed to encourage subscription to the Liberty Bonds. In October 1917, the Armenian National Union issued an appeal which ended with: "Let every Armenian who has any money in the bank make haste to buy Liberty Bonds according to his ability. Let there not be one single Armenian not wearing the badge of the Liberty Bond."



Miran Sevasly (1861-1935)

On April 6, 1918, the first anniversary of America's entry into the war, four hundred young Armenians, in addition to many young women and officials of the Armenian National Union, took part in the parade in Boston with floats depicting ancient Armenian events.

Mr. Sevasly, who had worked so effectively as president of the Armenian National Union, was later appointed a member of the Armenian National Delegation of Paris, a diplomatic body recognized by the allies as representing the Armenians. He went to Paris after the war and was appointed representative of the Delegation in Greece. Returning to America in 1923, he lived in New York until his death in 1935.

The post-war period changed the complexion of Armenian political organizations, due largely to developments on the territory of the former Russian Empire. The Armenian Revolutionary Federation became the dominant party in the short-lived Republic of Armenia, and its socialistic tendencies began to disappear. When the republic was sovietized this party was dissolved. Its leaders fled the country and assumed charge of local Dashnag organizations and their press in other lands. Their criticism of the Soviet regime in Armenia has been bitter and unremitting. Now, though the party is still affiliated with the Second International, almost all traces of Socialist ideology have disappeared from its press.

The Hunchagist party, formerly almost identical with the Dashnagists in its aims and aspirations, has retained its Marxist complexion and in recent years has entered into an agreement with Armenian Communists to cooperate with them in a People's Front

combination. Continuous strife within this organization has weakened it, although it still has a few branches in Massachusetts.

In 1921 the Reformed Hunchagists united with the Ramgavars under the name of the Democratic Liberal party (A.D.L.). This organization has its central directing force and its press in Boston. The liberalism of its members has made it possible for them to be friendly toward Soviet Armenia, without committing themselves to its doctrines.

There are several old-time leaders of Armenian political factions who have become permanent residents of the Commonwealth. Among them are Vahram Krikorian, now an insurance agent and a noted Armenian orator; Sarkis Malemezian, who since 1894 has taken a leading part in the affairs of the A. D. L. Society; Hratch Yervant, a graduate of Boston University Law School, highly esteemed by Massachusetts Armenians as an orator and journalist; Dr. H. Zovickian, a popular civic leader; Dr. N. S. D. Tashjian, a Boston dentist who is a veteran leader of the A.R.F.; and Professor Chakmakjian of Tufts College, former editor of "Hairenik."

In recent years both the A.R.F. and the A.D.L. have made efforts to organize the younger generation under their respective banners. At present there is hardly an Armenian community in Massachusetts which has not one or two chapters of these organizations, known as the A.D.L. Juniors and the A.R.F. Tzeghagrongs, with a membership made up of young men and women, for the most part American-born.

V.

THE ARMENIAN CHURCH

The Armenian Church is the oldest National Christian Church in the world, and is an independent and unique ecclesiastical organization. It claims to be Apostolic, but it resembles neither the Greek nor the Roman Catholic Church. Noel Buxton has described it as a cross between Congregationalism and Episcopalianism. Distinctively and exclusively an Armenian institution, it is formally known as the Armenian Apostolic Church.

According to tradition, Christianity was preached in Armenia early in the first century by the Apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew, and at approximately 300 A.D. the king's conversion was brought about by a royal secretary, Gregory, who had embraced the new faith while a youth in Caesarea.

To carry out this mission Gregory himself, with clergy recruited mostly in Syria and Cappadocia, spread the knowledge of the faith throughout the country. In 301 King Tiridates proclaimed Christianity the official state religion, thus making Armenia the first country to adopt Christianity as its national religion. The following year the Archbishop of Caesarea consecrated Gregory as bishop and appointed him "Catholicos" or "Exarch" of the Armenian Church. After his death Gregory received the title of "Illuminator" and the National Church placed him in the first rank of her galaxy of saints.

Political and religious upheavals in the fifth and

sixth centuries A.D. kept the Armenians too occupied to participate in the religious controversies then raging among the Christians. They acquiesced in the decisions of the Council of Ephesus (431) repudiating Nestorianism, probably because the Persian kings favored it, but they were dissatisfied with the Council of Chalcedon (451) and constituted themselves a separate church retaining their Monophysitic doctrine of the nature of Christ. With this exception the Armenians kept away from doctrinal controversies and developed their church as a distinct national institution favoring neither the Greek Orthodox nor the Roman Catholic factions.

The Armenian Church and its religious organization is based on democratic principles. The officials of the Church, from the pastor of the smallest local congregation to the Catholicos, who is the head of the Church, are chosen by the people either directly or through their popularly elected representatives. Furthermore it is decentralized and divided into large and small regional units or sees. The Catholicos has his seat at Etchmiadzin, a monastery near Erivan, capital of Soviet Armenia. The Patriarch of Constantinople has jurisdiction over the Armenians in Turkey and the Catholicos of Cilicia is at the head of the Armenians in that region. Prelacies in various parts of the world are under one of these three directing bodies of the Church.

The clergy is divided into two groups—celibates and those who are married. The secular priests are known as “kahana” or “yeretz” and are limited to local churches where they serve as pastors, rectors and deans, while the celibates preside over the church

organization proper and serve in the capacities of abbots, regional leaders, prelates, patriarchs and Catholici. The celibates are ranked starting with "abegha" (novice), "Vartabed" (doctor, magistros), "extreme Vartabed," "episcopos" (bishop), and "ar-kepiscopos" (archbishop).

The Church, as the unit in this organization, is governed by the congregation, which elects a board of Trustees as its executive body. Priests are chosen by the vote of the Church members who also elect their representatives or delegates to the Church Assembly. This latter body is the Church Convention of the prelacy, composed of the delegates of all the churches in the See, and of the officiating clergy of the churches. The delegates are laymen elected by popular vote by the church members. The Assembly has the right to devise and to amend the constitution of the prelacy, to pass judgment upon non-religious church questions, to elect and force a prelate to resign, to receive the report of this official and pass judgment upon it, and to elect two permanent committees to execute its decisions and act as a council for the affairs of the prelacy. Religious and temporal affairs are separated and one of the two committees, composed of clergymen, is given jurisdiction over religious matters, while the other, called the Political Committee, has charge of non-religious affairs. The Prelate is the executive officer.

The religious organization of the Armenians in the United States goes back to the last decade of the 19th century. The first Armenian Church in Massachusetts, which was also the first in this country, was built in Worcester. Known as the Church of the Savior

(Sourp Prgich) it is still the only church of the Gregorian Armenians in that city. Until its erection the Armenian immigrants had been deprived of church attendance. In answer to the plea of the Worcester Armenians the Patriarch of Constantinople sent Father Hovsep Sarajian, a "Vartabed," who as the only spiritual leader among his countrymen naturally exerted a profound influence upon them.

Unfortunately, however, the Armenian Patriarchate at Constantinople, who had chosen the Rev. Sarajian for this post, had apparently underestimated the importance of the Armenians in the New World and their possibilities for development, for Father Sarajian was not of the calibre which makes suitable leaders for newly-organized communities. After five stormy years, checkered with controversy and filled with the dissatisfaction of his congregation, Father Sarajian resigned his pastorate and left the country. Four years later he returned, having been elevated to the rank of bishop and made the prelate of the Armenian churches in America, with Worcester as his seat. During his term as prelate he visited the European powers, at the command of the Catholicos, on behalf of Armenia. He left America for the last time in 1911.

Despite his shortcomings this prelate played a most important role in the religious organization of Armenians, not only in Massachusetts, but throughout the nation. On his arrival he had found no Armenian churches in the country. When he left, there was a Federation of Churches which formed a synod with a constitution to guide it.

More church organizations came into existence

in many other Massachusetts cities but no other church edifice was built until 1915, when the Lowell Armenians erected the Church of Vartanian Saints.

The part played by Tophanelian in the religious organization of Worcester Armenians was carried on by other able lay Armenian leaders in Boston, Lowell, Lawrence and other centers. Of these, Avedis Selian, now a resident of Dorchester, is perhaps the most important. A lay reader by the consent of the Armenian Patriarch, Mr. Selian was given permission by the Episcopal Bishop of Boston to be ordained as a priest. This religious leader, although remaining a layman, gave much time and energy to the religious needs and the organization of his compatriots in Boston. In Lowell, Mr. Marcus Der Manuelian was a dominant force in religious affairs.

There are five Apostolic Church edifices in Massachusetts, located at Worcester, Boston, Watertown, Lawrence, and Lowell. But the number of congregations is greater, as there are religious organizations which are not in a position to have a church edifice and a clergyman. Such congregations, found in several small Massachusetts communities, hold occasional services in a friendly church placed at their disposal for the occasion or in a hired hall, with a visiting clergyman officiating.

The Watertown and Lawrence Churches are the newest to be built. Both were begun in 1931. Work progressed favorably though slowly, for the committees insisted that construction should advance only as funds permitted. The buildings were completed in 1936. However, services were conducted as soon as the walls and roofs were finished.

In recent years, following the murder of Archbishop Leon Tourian on Christmas day, 1933, in the Holy Cross Armenian Church in New York City, the Armenian Apostolic Church-goers have divided into two factions and have established separate places of worship.

Protestantism and Catholicism have to some extent infringed upon the Apostolic faith, and the influence of Protestant missionaries in particular has had tangible and continuing effect. Confronted with the double astonishment, when they arrived in Turkey, of learning that they were not permitted to attempt the conversion of Moslems, and of discovering a people already some sixteen hundred years old in the practice of Christianity, they diverted their efforts to the cause of education and of the Protestant sect.

American schools and colleges were established in various parts of Turkey—the best-known among them Robert College in Constantinople — and Protestant congregations and churches came into being wherever an Armenian community existed.

This contact with the missionaries, which was one of the causes for the Armenian immigration into the United States, largely accounts for the number of Protestants among Armenians in the United States. The Board of Missions continued to help their friends and converts in this country by giving them financial aid for building churches and establishing congregations. Even to the present day small congregations of Armenian Protestants receive financial aid from the Board for maintaining a church and a preacher. In many cases an American church is placed at their disposal for conducting their services at times which do



Sourp Hagop (St. James Church): Watertown



not conflict with the activities of the American congregation.

The first Armenian Protestant church in this country was established in Worcester in 1892, a very short time after the dedication there of the first Armenian Apostolic Church. It is known as the Martyrs' Church, and still has one of the most active congregations. In Metropolitan Boston the Protestant Armenians, after a period of conducting their services in various churches, purchased a building in Cambridge which is called the Porter Square Armenian Evangelical Church. Another congregation of Turkish-speaking Armenians under the name of the Cilician Evangelical Church conducts its services in a church in Watertown. In Lawrence the Bethel Church was dedicated in 1937 while a congregation in nearby Methuen and in Salem Depot, across the New Hampshire border, maintains the Ararat Congregational Church, attended by many Massachusetts Armenians in the summer months.

The church organizations of the Protestants are unlike those of their compatriots of the Apostolic faith and resemble those of American evangelical churches. Since many Protestants still consider the Apostolic church as the mother church and the relationship is most cordial, those of the Protestant belief frequently attend services at Apostolic churches. National holidays are often celebrated jointly, and there are leaders in both groups who advocate a closer understanding between the two with the hope of an ultimate reunion.

Although Roman Catholicism was first injected into the religious life of the Armenians during the

time of the Crusades, the Roman Church has few followers among these people. In the native land, a Roman Catholic Church could be found in any large community, but Catholics and Protestants have always constituted only a small proportion of the population. Although there are individual Armenian Catholics in Massachusetts, there is no organized congregation or church. One or two minor cults exist among Armenians here, called "spiritual brothers or sisters."

The Church has undoubtedly been the most important agency for the dissemination and preservation of culture among Armenians. Saint Sahag and Saint Mesrop have become national heroes for the renaissance created through their efforts, known as the Golden Age of Armenian history. St. Sahag was the head of the Armenian Church during the first half of the fifth century and Mesrop was the scholar and priest whom he commissioned to prepare an alphabet for the Armenian language. That these early leaders envisioned a new culture for all their people is evident in the very first words, according to tradition, ever to be translated and written by St. Mesrop himself in the new alphabet: "To know wisdom and instruction, to perceive the words of understanding." It was at this time that the first version of the Bible was translated from the Greek and Syriac into Armenian, an event of which the fifteen hundredth anniversary was recently celebrated throughout the Armenian world.

This tradition of ecclesiastical leadership in culture has endured, church sponsorship of language classes being a contemporary example. The Armenian colonies in Egypt and the Balkan countries, and the influential colony in India, had for several hundred

years prior to the World War developed their cultural agencies to a high degree. In these countries they had not only churches, but also educational institutions and a press. But in their native land and in their colonies in other European countries Armenian children were not admitted to public schools, a situation which made the creation of Armenian schools imperative. In America, because of the free public school system which prevailed, special Armenian schools were found to be unnecessary. However, the parents, in order to give their children a knowledge of Armenian traditions, made it a point to teach them the language.

To meet this need, parents themselves did the teaching or in some cases combined to engage a tutor for the instruction of their children several hours each week. This system gradually spread, and many communities formed committees to organize such instruction. Of recent years perhaps a dozen such committees, which previously operated as individual units in various sections of Greater Boston, have come under the direction of the Board of Trustees of the Armenian Holy Trinity Church and now operate through a Board of Education. As a result the classes have attained some semblance of uniformity.

There are perhaps a score of such classes in the Armenian tongue scattered throughout the State. The pupils range in age from five to fifteen, and attend mostly because of parental insistence. Though a nominal charge ranging from fifty cents to a dollar per month is made for instruction, those who are unable to pay are permitted to attend without payment. Besides the Armenian language, pupils in the advanced

classes are taught the history, literature and music of their parents' native land. They learn Armenian songs and are told Armenian folk tales. The teachers are for the most part women who have had teaching experience in their native land. Specially prepared text-books are used, some of which are printed in America and some abroad.

The Boston diocese, which is the largest in the State, has thirteen Armenian "schools" in Greater Boston, all under the supervision of the Boston church. Watertown, which is a separate diocese, has schools of its own. There are also Armenian classes at Worcester, Lawrence, Lowell, Haverhill, Springfield, Brockton, Newburyport, Milford, and Lynn, each under the supervision of its particular church. At various points in the State similar schools are conducted by Armenian Protestant churches.

VI

THE PRESS

Fr. M. Bodurian, an Armenian scholar belonging to the Viennese branch of the Mekhitarist monks, once said—"Whenever a few Armenians find themselves in a foreign land their first thought is to publish a newspaper instead of opening a kindergarten." American Armenians have been no exception. Of the score or more dailies, semi-weeklies, weeklies, semi-monthlies, monthlies and yearbooks once published in the State, but few have survived. Those that remain do so because they have become party organs.

At first neither writers nor editors of these journals had literary qualifications, and the publications were therefore devoid of literary merit. But with the growth of Armenian immigration the importance of Armenian colonies in the United States was enhanced and the political organizations sent abler men to edit the papers.

Their first paper, in this country, "Arekag," (Sun) was published at Jersey City, New Jersey, in May 1888, when the Armenians in the entire country barely numbered one thousand. "Arekag" contained, in addition to editorial comment, news and communications from Armenians in America and in their native land.

The first Armenian journal in Massachusetts, a mimeographed sheet called "Gaidzak" (Lightning), made its appearance at Lynn in 1895. It is said to have been a crude publication, hardly meriting the name of

newspaper, and it expired in the course of a few months.

Mr. S. Shagalian, a student at Worcester Polytechnic Institute and a teacher in the evening schools of that city, published in 1893 a semi-weekly called "Eprad" or "Yeprad" (Euphrates), which functioned over a period of approximately six months. The publisher, who acted both as editor and compositor, attempted to acquaint his readers with life in the New World and to bring them news of their native land, as well as editorials and other informative articles. The venture was most difficult, and Mr. Shagalian was soon forced to abandon it.

An important early Armenian publication, later known as "Tzain Hairenyatz" (Voice of the Fatherland), was founded in 1897, under the name of "Digris" (Tigris), at New York City, by H. Eginian and T. Charshafjian, who with several of their compatriots had formed a publishing company. When friction arose within the ranks, Eginian became sole owner, and in 1899 he transferred the venture to K. Chutjian. The new publisher changed the name of the paper to "Tzain Hairenyatz." After publishing twenty issues, Mr. Chutjian decided to move to Worcester, Massachusetts, "because New York was far from the Armenian communities." After staying in Worcester for twenty-nine weeks and printing a corresponding number of issues, he moved to Boston. Here he met with no greater success, and was finally obliged to turn the enterprise over to the Reformed Hunchagist Party, of which he was a member. "Tzain Hairenyatz" became the official organ of that society. The new arrangement brought prestige and popularity to the paper, and it

circulated among Armenians in all parts of the country. In 1903-04 it was published as a semi-weekly, but after a year it became a weekly, though doubled in size. In 1903, Souren Bartevian, a young intellectual from Paris, was called to its editorship, and under the guidance of this brilliant young journalist, who became a literary figure of some importance in his day, "Tzain Hairenyatz" grew apace. However, when discord arose in the Hunchagist party in 1907, and eventually led to that society's division into two factions, publication of the paper was discontinued.

Like all other important Armenian newspapers of its day, "Tzain Hairenyatz" was chiefly a journal of propaganda advocating the liberation of Armenia from Turkish domination. Patriotic devotion to the cause of Armenian independence, controversies and dissensions with rival factions and bitter criticism of their aims and activities, were the outstanding features of this paper. It gave news of Armenians in their homeland, described the activities of the various branches of the society which sponsored it, and published articles ranging from medical advice to contributions of literary type, which included novels in serial form, poems, short stories, and comments on international affairs.

About the same time that H. Eginian was relinquishing his rights to "Digris," another weekly founded in conjunction with T. Charshafjian was being turned over to the Dashnag Society. This paper, "Hairenik," established by Charshafjian at New York City in May of 1899 with a capital of two hundred dollars, was brought to Boston and used as a party organ. It still fulfills that function as a daily published

in the Massachusetts city. Since the Dashnag Society was a younger and smaller organization, its organ did not attain the prestige and circulation of its rival, "Tzain Hairenyatz." The editor, A. Vramian, although not lacking in stamina, was not equal to Barteonian in literary ability and the growth of "Hairenik," though steady, was slow. Its sponsoring society, however, was solid and well-disciplined. The split in the Hunchagist ranks and the ensuing suspension of "Tzain" proved a boom to "Hairenik."

In addition to Vramian, who later returned to Turkey and was elected a member of the Turkish Parliament after the change of regime in that country, "Hairenik" had two other editors who played prominent parts in Armenian politics. Simeon Vratzian, who filled the editorial chair before the entry of the United States into the World War, became Prime Minister of the Armenian Republic, and Rouben Darbinian, a former Minister of Justice of that Republic, has been at the head of the paper since 1921. The steady growth of "Hairenik" was greatly accelerated by the World War, when it was published semi-weekly; later, it was published three times a week, until it became a daily publication in 1916.

"Bahag," a parent of the present "Baikar," was founded in 1910 at Providence, R. I., as the official organ of the Reformed Hunchagist Party. A weekly quite similar to "Hairenik," and with an Armenian name signifying "The Sentinel," it came to Boston in 1911 under the editorship of Hratch Yervant, a young graduate of Boston University Law School who filled this post for many years. Like other party organs, it grew during the war period both in circulation and in

the frequency of its appearance. In 1921 it was appearing three times a week under the editorship of Y. Messiaian.

Soon after the suspension of "Tzain Hairenyatz," the faction which had seceded from the Reformed Hunchagist Party had begun issuing a weekly of its own under the editorship of S. Barteonian. Called "Azk" (Nation), this publication first made its appearance in April of 1907. It continued the policies established by its predecessor, "Tzain Hairenyatz," and grew in circulation on a scale similar to that attained by its rival, "Hairenik." With the World War and the subsequent arousing of Armenian interest in patriotic affairs to fever pitch, "Azk" appeared with greater frequency, first semi-weekly, then thrice weekly, and then daily.

Meanwhile, the faction that was publishing "Azk" became a new organization called the Constitutional Democratic Party. Barteonian returned to Turkey in 1908, and Mr. A. Nazar, head-master of an Armenian Academy in Turkey, was imported in 1910 to fill the editorial chair. In 1921, the Constitutional Democrats and the Reformed Hunchagists, now known as the Liberals, both of which were factions of the old Nationalistic Hunchagist Party split in 1907, were reunited under the name of the Democratic Liberal Party of Armenia. Their organs "Azk" and "Bahag" were combined into one daily newspaper appearing as "Azk-Bahag." Mr. Messiaian, editor of "Bahag," and A. Nazar, editor of "Azk," became joint editors of the combined paper. On January 1, 1923, the name was changed to "Baikar" (Campaign), under which it is still being published in Boston. Today Mr. Messiaian is

editor-in-chief and Mr. Nazar a contributing editor of this paper.

The old rivalry between "Baikar" and "Hairenik" survives to the present day. Save for partisan propaganda, there is little discernible difference between the two papers. In both there are news from Armenia and Armenian settlements in other lands, records of international happenings and of events in America, and correspondence from various communities in the United States which deals, for the most part, with the activities of local branches of the organization which sponsors the paper. Each issue contains also an instalment of a novel published in serial form; there are occasional short stories, poems, and other types of literature.

These papers employ no news agencies and their chief source of material is American newspapers. Perhaps fifteen per cent of their space is given to advertising matter, including announcements of the social affairs of various organizations.

In 1901, an Armenian student with scholarly inclinations began the publication at Cambridge, Massachusetts, of an Armenian semi-monthly magazine devoted to educational, scientific, and philosophical discussions. The student was M. Minassian and his magazine was called "Looyce" (Light). Published from 1901 to 1908, it appeared as a monthly during the last year of its existence. The magazine did not become very popular, but it was sought and read eagerly in Armenian educational circles in Turkey. After the Turkish revolution of 1908 Mr. Minassian was invited to return to his native land, and his departure terminated the publication.

The remnant of the original Hunchagist Society has as its chief organ "Eridassard Haiasdan" (Young Armenia). Founded at Boston in 1903 by S. Sabah-Culian, a well-known Hunchagist leader, this paper has wandered from city to city with intermittent periods of non-publication. It has appeared in New York, in Chicago, and in Providence, and has recently reappeared in New York after a period of inactivity.

"Ardsiv" (Eagle), a literary and political periodical published as a weekly in 1905-06, and as a semi-monthly in 1907-08, had a stormy existence, since it specialized in fiery invective and violently attacked individuals, organizations, and other publications. Though its editor and publisher, Mr. Arshag Der Mahdesian, won quite a reputation as a writer of polemics through his efforts in the paper, "Ardsiv" was very popular because of its controversial nature.

A contemporary and rival of "Ardsiv" was "Arax," a weekly founded in Boston by H. Hagopian in October of 1905. It was Mr. Hagopian's ambition to make his paper the greatest literary medium of American Armenians, but he fell far short of his goal. Old-time Armenians still recall the heated controversies of these two Boston newspapers, "Ardsiv" and "Arax," which seemed to expend all their energy in blackening each other's reputations.

"Hunchag," the central organ of the Reorganized Hunchagist party, is apparently afflicted with the same spirit of wanderlust which characterizes its contemporary, "Eridassard Haiasdan," for it has made its appearance in various European and American cities. Though one issue of "Hunchag" was published at Boston in 1904 and another in 1907, it is no longer a

Bay State publication, but appears in Providence, Rhode Island. "Zurna," "Dailailik," "Dzakhavel," "Nuirag" and "Hai" were unimportant publications which did not survive more than several issues. "Zurna" and "Dailailik," semi-monthlies with humorous intentions, appeared in 1910-11; "Dzakhavel," a similar publication, came into being in 1915-16, but was soon forced to suspend operations. A monthly magazine called "Nuirag" also appeared during the same period in five issues, and "Hai," another monthly, managed to exist for ten issues.

"Housharar," a semi-monthly published as official organ of the Armenian General Benevolent Union, prints neither news nor articles, but contains reports of activities of this organization in various localities. Though established in Boston, "Housharar" has for the past ten years been a New York publication.

In 1918, Archbishop Papken Gulesserian, who later became the co-Catholicos of Cilicia, issued a magazine called "Taurus." At first a weekly, and later a monthly, "Taurus" contained valuable scholarly articles, reflecting the recognized standing as a scholar and journalist of the high church dignitary who was its publisher. This same year, "Shant," a magazine with high literary aspirations, published three issues. Another monthly magazine, "Veradznount," struggled futilely for two years (1918-1920). "Ardaroutian Tzain" (Voice of Justice), was published weekly in Boston in 1919 for forty weeks. The most ambitious of post-war publications was "Punik" (Phoenix), a literary monthly which appeared in Boston from 1920 to 1922 and was the product of three writers who hoped to establish an Armenian magazine in the style of

contemporary American periodicals. That ambition, was frustrated because the editors could not find enough readers to support their magazine.

What "Punik" failed to accomplish, "Hairenik Monthly," a publication which has appeared regularly since November of 1922, has succeeded in achieving, perhaps because it is sponsored by a powerful organization. Rouben Darbinian, who also edits "Hairenik Daily," is the editor of this periodical. It has gained an enviable reputation among Armenians in all parts of the world, and contains, in addition to fiction, essays on historical, biographical, scientific, and philosophical themes, poetry, drama, and other literary productions. "Arpi," a monthly magazine for children, has been produced in Boston since 1931 by A. Barsoghian. "Hai Vasdag," a trade journal for Armenian merchants, sponsored by Charles Movsesian of Haverhill, appeared monthly in Boston from 1931 to 1933, under the editorship of Mr. M. G. Veradzine.

The Reformed Hunchagist Society, which was publishing "Tzain Hairenyatz" in Armenian, decided in 1904 to publish a monthly magazine in English. Thus "Armenia" came into existence, with the purpose of acquainting the American public with the history, culture, and literature of the Armenian people. American friends of Armenia gave their co-operation and the list of honorary editors boasted such names as Julia Ward Howe, Alice Stone Blackwell, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Lucia Ames Mead, Rev. Charles Gordon Ames, Edward H. Clement, Prof. Albert S. Cook, Rev. Charles F. Dole, Rabbi Charles Fleischer, William Lloyd Garrison, Edwin D. Mead, Rollo Ogden, James Bronson Reynolds, and Prof. William G. Ward. The

split of the Hunchagist ranks brought about the suspension of the magazine, but it was resurrected in 1910 by Mr. A. Mahdesian, in New York, under the name of "New Armenia," and for nearly twenty years appeared as an organ of propaganda.

The Armenian National Union of America, composed of representatives of the major Armenian organizations, in December of 1917 started another organ of propaganda for the cause of their homeland, called "The Armenian Herald." This monthly, edited by Mr. M. Sevasly, a Boston attorney and President of the National Union, was sent to prominent Americans—members of Congress, outstanding educators, and other people of importance—until the time of its suspension in April, 1919.

As American-born Armenians began to come of age their elders conceived the plan of giving them a nationalistic education through publications in the English tongue. The first periodical of that type, "The Armenian Mirror," began on July 1, 1932, as a Boston weekly publication sponsored by the Baikar Association. Elisha Chrakian, a graduate of Brown University and V. C. Vahan, an Amherst man, were the first editors. This paper contains news of Armenia and its people, articles and literary selections, either translated from the Armenian or written in English by members of the staff. Editorials and special features complete the contents of the paper, of which Bedros Norehad is now editor.

"Hairenik" in the meantime had assigned two columns on its front page to the English-speaking generation, wherein appeared articles, stories and news in the English language. It was on these columns

that William Saroyan made his literary debut under the pen name of Sirak Gorian. In March 1934 this English section evolved into a separate publication, and has appeared since then as "Hairenik Weekly" under the editorship of James G. Mandalian. During the three years of its publication Edward J. O'Brien in his yearly anthology of "Best Short Stories" has listed it among the American periodicals which have published short stories of distinct merit.

Since Boston has for many years been the intellectual center of American Armenians, few extra-state newspapers are read by these people in Massachusetts. There are, however, a few exceptions. "Panvor," a New York daily, is read by Communists and their sympathizers; "Gotchnag," which was founded and published in Massachusetts for many years, and now appears in New York as a serious weekly, has a wide circulation; the "Armenian Spectator," a weekly paper in English from New York, is read by some English-speaking Armenians; and "Asbarez" and "Mushag," both published in Fresno, California, have occasional readers among the group in Massachusetts. There are some people who subscribe to Armenian newspapers and periodicals published in European countries, in Egypt, and in Syria. A few publications from Armenia also find their way into the State.

VII

LITERATURE

Legends and Heroes

Although legends and written literature of the Armenians begin with St. Mesrop's inscription of the Armenian alphabet in the fifth century, fragments of pagan literature preserved by the "Armenian Herodotus," Moses of Khorene, give proof of the earlier existence of literary talent of the race. Ancient Armenian historians mention minstrels called "Golthan Singers," who wandered throughout the country singing the praises of the demi-gods and heroes.

Armenian folk-lore until recently remained comparatively unexplored. Numerous legends, fables and tales are now being collected and classified by scholars in this field.

The very origin of the race itself is based upon a legend which until recently was accepted as fact and taught in Armenian schools. Their own designation of themselves as Hai and of their country as Hayastan is directly connected with the legend of Haik or Haig (the latter is the modern pronunciation) who is reputed to be the founder of the race. Haik was a great-grandson of Noah of Biblical fame, and was connected with the building of the tower of Babel. Bel, the ruler of Babel, quarreled with Haik because Bel wanted to be worshipped as a god and the legendary hero refused to pay such homage. Haik with his family and servants migrated north and finally settled in the country of Ararat. Bel sent for him and when Haik

refused to return to his Mesopotamian home the Assyrian tyrant invaded his country to force him into submission. In the battle that ensued Haik was victorious, slaying Bel with an arrow from his own bow. The place where Bel fell is called "Gerezman" (grave) and is so pointed out to this day.

As this first legend illustrates the hatred of tyranny, so the legend of Ara and Semiramis brings forth Armenian devotion to home and family ties. Ara the Beautiful was a young and popular king of Armenia. Semiramis, the Queen of Assyria, became obsessed with the thought of possessing the Armenian Adonis. She sent emissaries with precious gifts to Ara and asked him to come to Nineveh, promising to make him the ruler of the Assyrian Empire if he would only satisfy her desires. But Ara the Beautiful was married and loved his wife, so he sent back the emissaries of Semiramis with his determined refusal. The persistent Queen invaded Armenia with an army, determined to accomplish her purpose with force. The two armies met, and despite the very emphatic order of Semiramis not to harm Ara, he was slain.

The legend of Vahagn, a king who was deified, shows the influence of Hellenic culture and religion. King Vahagn, because of legendary bravery reminiscent of Herakles, became the Armenian fire-god. Although a late-comer, he occupied an exalted place among the deities of the Armenian Pantheon. In his "Armenian Legends & Festivals" Mr. Boettiger tells the legend of the origin of the Milky Way, and from many variants of this mythical tale chooses the following. Vahagn went to Assyria and stole corn from

the barns of King Barsham. When the Assyrian king chased the valiant thief he tried to hide in the heavens. On his way home some of the corn dropped and formed the Milky Way, which in Armenian is called the "track of the corn stealer." V. C. Vahan in his "History of Armenia" records the most important part of the legend of Vahagn in a fragment of a song, originating in pagan times and preserved for us by an ancient historian, which describes the birth of this king-god:

*"Heaven and earth were in travail,
And the purple sea was in travail;
The crimson reed in the purple sea
Was likewise in travail.
Through the hollow of the reed smoke arose,
Through the hollow of the reed flame arose,
And out of the flame sprang forth a youth;
He had hair of fire,
He had a beard of flame,
And his eyes were two suns."*

The legend of Artavazd also comes from pre-Christian times. Artavazd was the son of King Artaxias, who lived in the second century before Christ. He was a great and good king and when he died after a very prosperous reign of fifty-one years many of his followers killed themselves in accordance with the custom of the time. So many men of importance committed suicide upon the grave of the dead king that his successor, Artavazd, complained to the spirit of his father, saying, "Now that thou art gone and hast taken with thee the whole land, how shall I reign over the ruins?" The spirit of Artaxias became irritated and cursed his son with the following words:

*"When thou ridest forth to hunt
Over the free heights of Massis,
The braves (spirits) shall possess thee,
And shall carry thee up
On the free heights of Massis;
There shalt thou abide
And never more see the light."*

The curse of Artaxias was effective and Artavazd disappeared with his horse into a chasm while he was hunting on Mt. Ararat. The legend further relates that the unfortunate king was bound in chains and confined in a cavern. His two faithful dogs gnawed at the chains constantly in order to set him free, but the sound of hammers striking on anvils elsewhere served to strengthen the chains and Artavazd still remains a captive within Mt. Ararat. The legend adds that when, and if, Artavazd succeeds in escaping he will come to change (destroy) the world.

The conversion of the Armenians to Christianity has given rise to several legends concerning not only early apostles and saints but also the Saviour Himself. A very popular legend relates how King Abgar of Edessa, a contemporary of Christ, sent emissaries to Jesus and invited Him to his palace, ending his message with the following words: "My city is a small one, but it is beautiful, and it is sufficient for us twain." Christ declined the offer, saying that He had to fulfil all that for which He was sent. But He promised to send one of His disciples after His ascension; also He sent an image of Himself which, says the legend, Christ made by passing a handkerchief over His face.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a number of Armenians attained influential positions

in the service of the Turkish Sultans, receiving titles, such as Bey and Pasha from the Ottoman rulers. Among their own people they constituted a class by themselves, becoming the upper stratum of Armenian society, and universally acclaimed as "Amiras." One of these, Kazaz Artin Amira (Harutuine Bezjian), through his services both to the Empire and to his race has already attained legendary proportions. A poor orphan boy, he became next to the Sultan the most influential person in Turkey. His benefactions to his people included churches, school and hospitals. The great Armenian hospital in Constantinople which he founded and endowed, remains to this day as a testimonial to this philanthropist.

The most popular national hero of the Armenians is undoubtedly Vartan Mamikonian, a general of the fifth century of our era, who fought against the Persians for religious freedom. Although Vartan was defeated and killed in a battle on June 1st, 451, his memory has been perpetuated. The day of Vartan is celebrated in February and in accordance with a custom among Armenians, infants born near that day are usually named after the leaders who fell with Vartan in that now memorable battle. The Armenian Church has been responsible for this hero-worship, for it has consecrated the day and made it a church holiday.

Another legendary hero, Sourp Sarkis or Serkis (Serge) of Byzantium has come to be known as the patron saint of lovers. The story concerning this saint is told by Minas Tcheraz in his "L'Orient Inedit" as follows:

"One of the Byzantine emperors asked the King of Armenia to send him an army of 40,000 soldiers to

help him in one of his wars. The latter sent him forty mountaineers, saying that each one was worth one thousand men. The Greek ruler thought that the Armenian king was making fun of him but without showing his resentment he placed the forty warriors on the front line, hoping that they would be wiped out at once. But they surprised the emperor by destroying the enemy army and returning triumphantly to Constantinople. Frightened by these unusual fighters, the Greek ruler decided to get rid of them by trickery. He selected forty of the most beautiful maidens and gave one to each warrior for his entertainment, with strict orders to the women to cut the throats of the Armenians while they slept and the threat of taking their lives if they failed. Thirty-nine women cut thirty-nine throats that night, but one of the girls, the daughter of a priest, failed to accomplish her mission. Her would-be victim was none other than St. Serkis, the leader of the band, as well as the most valiant and the most handsome. Being awakened by her sobs Serkis learned of the dastardly plot and taking the love-lorn maiden with him escaped on his horse by swimming across the Bosphorus with his prized captive."

Modern history and the Anti-Turk revolutionists have added to the folklore of the people. For the Armenian youths the heroes to be admired and to be imitated are the leaders of this movement. Out of the group emerged one who because of his activities in the World War has won the love and acclaim of Armenians throughout the world. Antranig Ozanian (Zoravar Antranig) was born in Shabin-Kara-Hissar and received a rudimentary education. Fired with the

new patriotic fervor, he joined the Armenian Revolutionary Federation and participated in the guerilla warfare against the Turks. When the Balkan War broke out in 1912 he was already famous as an intrepid fighter. He offered his services to the Bulgarians and with a group of volunteers fought with distinction on the side of this Balkan nation against the common enemy, the Turk.

The World War offered him his greatest opportunity. He went to the Caucasus and there organized a division of volunteers which became a shock brigade, rendering invaluable service to the Russian armies and rescuing many Armenians. In 1920 he came to the United States and finally settled in California, where he died in 1927.

Classical and Modern Works

With the adoption of the new alphabet in the fifth century a great cultural era dawned for the Armenians. Many young people were sent to study in Constantinople, Alexandria, Edessa, and Athens, the great centers of learning at the time. Imbued with this new Greek culture they returned to their native land and earnestly engaged in imparting to their people the wisdom of Hellenic thought. The result was the Golden Age of Armenian literature, whose luminaries were Eznik of Kolb, Eghishe, Lazar of Pharp, and Moses of Khorene—the greatest of ancient Armenian historians. However, they were so busy translating Greek and Syriac works that little original writing was done.

Following centuries saw little literary activity



General Antranig (1867-1927)



until the establishment of the Cilician kingdom. Sporadic works in the succeeding years culminated in the printing of the first book in the Armenian language in the sixteenth century.

Up to the nineteenth century the literary medium for writers was the ancient classical Armenian. In the meantime, the vernacular of the people had changed, making the ancient language unintelligible to the common people. A movement to write in the popular tongue gave rise to a new literary language based on the modern dialects of Constantinople and of Ararat. Known as Eastern Armenian and Western Armenian, these two dialects of the modern literary language differ a little in grammar but not in vocabulary, and are used by Russian Armenians and Turkish Armenians respectively. In 1836 the Mekhitarists of Venice issued a thesaurus of the Armenian language, giving both the Latin and Greek equivalents of each word.

As a result two literary centers were created, one in Constantinople and the other in Tiflis, and before the end of the century a new literature of no mean importance had come into existence. Reputations were established in almost every branch of literature. Tourian, Toumaian, Isahakian, and Varoujan became great poets; Raffi, Tzerents and Shirvanzade attained popularity by their novels; Zohrab and Aharonian were the great short-story writers; Baronian and Odian attained fame as satirists and humorists; Sundukian and Shirvanzade created a new dramatic literature. In addition, through translation, many European writers were introduced to the Armenians.

Some of this modern literature was translated

into English by Alice Stone Blackwell and published in book form under the title of "Armenian Poems Rendered in English Verse." The wide range of subject matter runs the complete gamut of human emotions—emotions intensified by the suffering these people have so long endured. The poems express the passionate Armenian love of family, home, and religion and their fierce willingness to fight and to suffer through centuries of slavery rather than to compromise with unjust oppressors. In practically all of them the cadence resembles the theme in that it carries a melancholy resignation to eternal sadness. There is music in this verse to the extent that reading it makes one aware of unsung song. "New Dark Days" by Bedros Tourian, the son of an Armenian blacksmith who died of tuberculosis when he was but twenty-one, is a vivid indictment of the Turk's cruelty.

*"The centuries of bloodshed
Are past, those cruel years;
But still there is one country
Whose mountains drip with tears,
Whose river-banks are blood-stained,
Whose mourning loads the breeze,—
A land of dreary ruins,
Ashes and cypress-trees.
The forehead pure, the sacred veil
Of the Armenian maid,
Shall rude hands touch, and hell's hot breath
Her innocence invade?
They do it as men crush a flower
By no compunction stirred;
They slaughter an Armenian
As they would kill a bird."*

Raphael Patkanian, who for forty years was teacher, author, editor, symbolizes the tragedy of Armenian patriotism in the lines—

*"When the mother, with sore travail,
To the world a man-child gives,
Let the sharp sword from his father
Be the first gift he receives."*

His voice also plaintively reminds Europe of Armenia's gift to the ages in preventing, long centuries ago, the Tartars, Turks, and Persians from overrunning Europe.

*"Have you forgotten, Europe, how the dart
Of the fierce Persian pointed at your heart,
Until, on that dread field of Avariar,
Armenian blood quenched his fanatic fire?"*

Massachusetts Writers

With the exception of William Saroyan no Armenian-American has attained national literary prominence in this country. But in Massachusetts, the early focal point of all Armenian political and religious organizational activities in the United States, there are several persons among the Armenians who have written and published their works in their native tongue and in English.

Of those who write in English two Boston men, both of Amherst College, head the list. They are M. Vartan Malcom, an attorney and author of "Armenians in America," and V. C. Vahan, whose "History of Armenia," published a year ago, received high praise from the literary critics of the "Transcript" and the "Christian Science Monitor." Mr. Malcom's book, "Armenians in America" gives a general picture of this

people in the United States, while Mr. Vahan's "History of Armenia" records their story from the earliest times to the sixth century of our era.

Readers of the "When I Was A Boy" series will recall Mr. Manoog Alexanian's "When I Was a Boy in Armenia," as well as Mr. G. Vahgatsi's children's story, "The Little Host."

Authors writing in the native language have been more abundant. In the beginning the foremost media of literary expression were the Armenian newspapers. Among the earliest contributing authors was Souren Barteavian, noted for his short stories.

Just before the World War there came to Massachusetts an Armenian poet whose verses were destined to symbolize the new revolutionary creed of the Armenians. Writing under the penname of "Siamanto," Adom Yarjanian expressed the strong nationalistic ardor of his people. His patriotism was not restricted to the pen alone for he returned to Turkey during the World War, where he was eventually slain by the Turks. His idealism is strongly expressed in these excerpts from "Deification."

While the mob of rebels was advancing heedlessly
Toward new clashes and the sacred ideal,
Spreading terror like a forest being transplanted,
And conquering the horrified horizons,
Suddenly two Forms, sternly armed,
Their swords pointing to the Sun, spoke to us:

"Brothers, today is the Day,
And we know you are ready for the strife,
But before you aim your fists at them,
Upon the cross-stones of this ruined temple,
Where their bones lie immortalized,
Listen to the deification of Their glory,
Which our voices shall sing for you and for their souls.

"O ye who so unselfishly shed your blood
For the salvation of us all,
Who passed over the golden summit of the Ideal,
With your gaze affixed to the invincible Hope,
Living and suffering inwardly all our sorrows,

"It was you who in the iron hour of destruction and salvation
Rang the alarm for breaking our chains,
From rampart to rampart, from tower to tower,
And beyond the gaols and dungeons and forts,
Up to the cities of Serfdom. . .

"Glory and blessings upon ye, again and again!
And now we part from ye,
To spread the tidings that your arms henceforth
Are the arms of your revolting sons,
That your faith is their fanaticism,

That they will ride forth blessing your deification,
Toward who knows what victories or what glorious defeats."

The traditional domination of the Armenian literary field by the clergy has also been manifest in the Commonwealth in the work of Archbishop Seropian and Gullessarian, high dignitaries of the Church, who have left their mark upon the literature of Massachusetts Armenians. Archbishop Mushegh Seropian had already made a reputation as a literateur when he came to this country in 1911 and settled in Boston. In 1912 and 1913 he published two volumes of "The American-Armenian Yearbook" in which appeared the first part of his comprehensive history of "Armenian Communities in the United States." Unfortunately the history has not appeared in complete

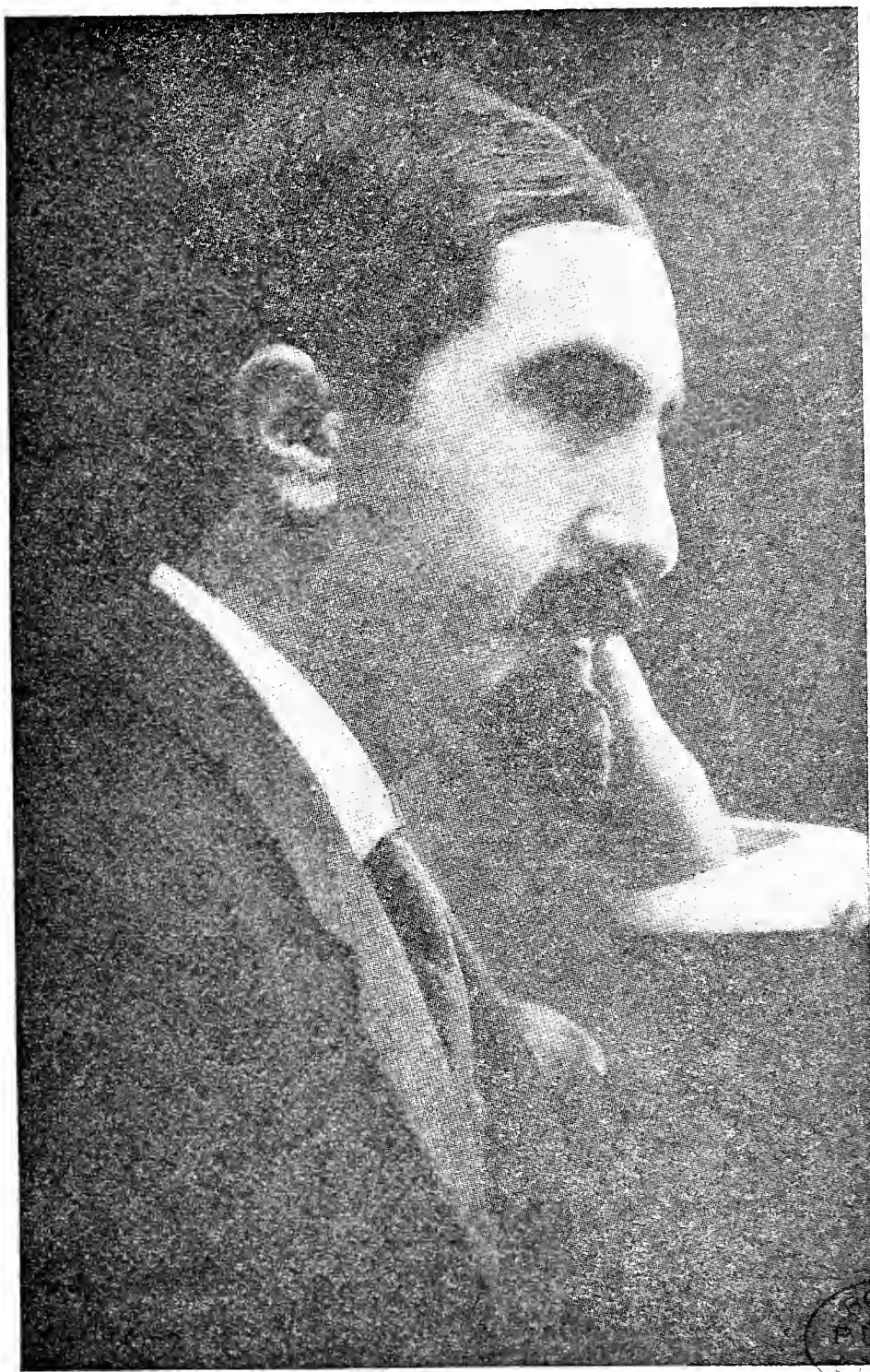
form. Seropian left the country during the war and later resigned his clerical position. He now lives in Syria where he continues his literary work.

Archbishop Papken Gullesserian was a prominent scholar and historian when he came to Massachusetts. He has contributed articles to Armenian periodicals, on historical and theological subjects, and has published several volumes in these fields. He became co-Catholicos of Cilicia in later years and died in 1936.

A well-known author in contemporary Armenian literature in Massachusetts is Yervant Messiaian, the editor of "Baikar," a native of Sivas, who received his education in American schools in Turkey, notably at Robert College at Constantinople. Years of residence in France have supplemented his American education and his constant contact with Armenian affairs has preserved in him his native traits, thus endowing him with a cosmopolitan point of view. Mr. Messiaian has proved himself a versatile writer, having already published a play, a novel, a philosophical essay, several volumes of literary criticism, and a book of biographical sketches of Armenian leaders.

Another writer who has received acclaim in the Armenian literary world is Hampartzoom Gelenian, who writes under the pen name of Hamasdegh. His stories and novels deal with the pre-war rural life of his native Harpoot. With him, however, literature is an avocation, probably because it is almost impossible for an Armenian author to support himself by writing.

The novelist who has come nearest to making a living with his pen is Ardashes Hovsepian, once a member of the Parliament of the Armenian Republic before its sovietization, now better known by his



"Siamanto" -- Adom Yarjanian (1878-1915)

pseudonym, Malkhas. He publishes his own works, which may account for his success in making a living by writing. There are to his credit a long series of novels, continued under several titles. When finished they will present a picture of the revolutionary movement for the liberation of the race during the last eighty years. Among his published works is also a volume of memoirs.

Other writers who can be included are Dr. A. Apelian of Belmont, who has written several volumes of fiction and one or two medical books for lay readers; Lutfi Minas of Watertown, has published a book of poems; Mr. A. Nazar, an editor of "Baikar," has a novel to his credit; Mr. Gregory Vahgatsi has a novelette and Mr. Armen Bardizian of the "Hairenik" staff has just published a book dealing with the contemporary activities and controversies of the Armenian factions.

VIII

THE ARTS

Music and Dances

As Armenia is situated geographically between the East and the West, so is its music midway between the pentatonic music of the Far East and the polyphonic music of the West.

In its original form Armenian music was more Oriental than Western. Under the influence of Greek culture, Armenians began to use different forms, several of which have been preserved in the famous "sharagans" (chants or hymns). These were handed down traditionally and not too accurately; and as they all come under the eight prescribed tsains or modes, the cantor who knows and can sing them all on demand is very hard to find and highly valued among his people.

Since the Armenian Church has played a leading role in the cultural life of the nation, church music has been of major importance in the history of Armenian music, and will be kept alive wherever Armenian groups are living.

Formerly printed in the Armenian notation, patterned closely upon the Gregorian system, the scores were without meaning to eyes accustomed to Western music and notation. As in Gregorian music, there are eight modes or scale structures, and each Armenian "sharagan" or chant is built on one of these. "Hame-naini," taken from the Armenian liturgy, illustrates the sublimity and depth of the religious songs.

It was during the Golden Age of Armenian culture, from 400 to 425 A.D., that some of the Armenian

HAMENAINI

Ha • mē • na • i ne orh • nēa • l vēs thé • r. orh •
Nē • mq ē • xā qēz • cō • vē • mq ēz •

Andante.

7.9. 0. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838. 839. 840. 841. 842. 843. 844. 845. 846. 847. 848. 849. 850. 851. 852. 853. 854. 855. 856. 857. 858. 859. 860. 861. 862. 863. 864. 865. 866. 867. 868. 869. 870. 871. 872. 873. 874. 875. 876. 877. 878. 879. 880. 881. 882. 883. 884. 885. 886. 887. 888. 889. 890. 891. 892. 893. 894. 895. 896. 897. 898. 899. 900. 901. 902. 903. 904. 905. 906. 907. 908. 909. 910. 911. 912. 913. 914. 915. 916. 917. 918. 919. 920. 921. 922. 923. 924. 925. 926. 927. 928. 929. 930. 931. 932. 933. 934. 935. 936. 937. 938. 939. 940. 941. 942. 943. 944. 945. 946. 947. 948. 949. 950. 951. 952. 953. 954. 955. 956. 957. 958. 959. 960. 961. 962. 963. 964. 965. 966. 967. 968. 969. 970. 971. 972. 973. 974. 975. 976. 977. 978. 979. 980. 981. 982. 983. 984. 985. 986. 987. 988. 989. 990. 991. 992. 993. 994. 995. 996. 997. 998. 999. 1000.

qē n ā xā cō ha z naniq ē xā qēn. a - ga z

Alti divisi

Tenori divisi

chē n mq ē xā qē z. thór A s s twadz mē - s r

pp

liturgy was composed, doubtless influenced by the old pagan tunes. Armenian clergymen continued to add to the liturgy by composing the "sharagans," which became very popular. The best "sharagans" are those composed by Catholicos Nerses the Graceful, who lived in the XII century.

No less important are the Armenian folk songs which have been sung by the peasants for hundreds of years. Fragments of folk songs known to have existed among the Armenians during paganism have been recorded in some of the early histories. During the middle ages troubadours and minstrels wandering through the country sang these folk songs as well as some of their own compositions. Most famous of these songsters were Nahapet Kuchak and Sayat Nova. The themes are the usual ones of love, home, the fields, and the sufferings of an oppressed and persecuted people. There is a mournful quality in many of them which, when one remembers the terrific suffering these people have been enduring for hundreds of years under the Turks, Persians and Kurds, is not surprising. The songs contain nevertheless a deathless hope and a deep faith, testifying to the courage of the people.

The revolutionary movement for the liberation of their country gave rise to patriotic songs, which though of little artistic value, have become very popular. These songs are heard often in political gatherings. Such tunes as "Pam Porodan," "Mer Hairenik," "Azadn Asduats," although devoid of any trace of Armenian music, are familiar to almost every Armenian. Some of these tunes are adaptations of popular European marches and songs, and most of them are simple ditties.

In the nineteenth century a new interest in Armenian music, both church and secular, began to manifest itself. The influence of European culture, introduced to Armenia by students who had studied at Western universities, brought forth a renaissance. Baba Hampartsoom Lemonjian (1768-1839) originated the Armenian "neumes," symbols similar to shorthand figures, which were written over the words to indicate whether the singers should go up or down the scale. Nicholas Tashjian, an Armenian musician, collected and edited a book of hymns and chants, containing 1,100 pages all in "neume" form, which was published in 1875. Others, finding the neume system inadequate and difficult, began to use European notes. The whole liturgy is now transcribed in western notation and is used by Armenian churches in Massachusetts in that form.

Within the past fifty years Armenian musicians have rewritten a great deal of their folk music in the European style. The pioneers in this movement were such men as Gara-Murza, Magar Egmalian, Edward Hurmuz, and Komitas Wartabed.

The only Armenians in Massachusetts who compose and rearrange are M. Toumajan and Vagharshak Servantz. Both were pupils of the famous Armenian musician Komitas Wartabed. The education of Servantz in Western music consists of two years in Paris under Rene de Normand and three years in Germany at the Berlin Conservatory, from which he was graduated. Coming to the United States in 1929, he made Boston his home. He has published about 200 songs, some of which are original compositions and others arrangements of old folk songs. Servantz has given

concerts in Jordan and Symphony Halls in Boston, and has taken part as leader in music festivals and in the Boston Tercentenary exercises of 1930.

A young composer who has attracted the attention of music critics is Alan Scott Hovaness, the son of Professor H. Chakmakjian of Tufts College. His compositions, however, have no connection with Armenian music.

Rose Zulalian of Revere, Massachusetts, is the outstanding Armenian singer in Massachusetts. Her programs have included concert and operatic selections, as well as Armenian church and folk songs. She has appeared in several operas and in an operetta given in Boston.

Russian Armenians, whose cultural surroundings have been more fortunate, have contributed in large measure to Armenian music and several names are well known in musical circles. Spendiarioff is one of the most notable who have gained permanent place in the field of symphonic music. Romanos Melikian, whose death was mourned throughout Armenia a year ago, and H. Stepanian, the best known of present day Armenian composers, have become popular not only in Armenia but with music lovers throughout the world.

The churches have organized choirs which sing the melodious chants sung centuries ago. Patriotic and folk songs are rendered at public meetings and private parties, but rarely to non-Armenian audiences. Armenians have made no marked attempt to share their music with other peoples with the exception of their appearances at the International Festivals in 1925 under the leadership of Krikor Suni, who won third prize

for mixed chorus with his arrangement of the folk song, "Alagyaz." Since then they have appeared regularly each year under the leadership of various directors, winning prizes for their singing.

Armenian dances are not unlike those of other Near Eastern peoples. They have solo dances, duets, quartets, and group dances. In the duets the partners dance opposite each other without coming into physical contact. In group dances the participants form a circle joining their little fingers or entwining their arms and dancing intricate steps to music.

The dances vary according to the tunes, their tempo, and the locality of origin. Some of the most popular tunes are "Lepo Leh Leh," "Hoy Nazan Im," "Im Chinari Yare," and "Tamzara."

Theatre

The Armenian Theatre, as such, is practically non-existent in the State. Ancient historians record theatres among their people in pagan times, even giving the name of an Armenian king as a dramatist of high repute. Although his plays were once favorably received on the stages of Athens and Rome, no trace of that ancient Armenian dramatic literature remains. Only during the past hundred years have Armenians shown any interest in the drama, and since peasants in provincial towns and tiny villages had no opportunity to witness any dramatic presentation, it was only in the larger centers of culture—in Constantinople, Smyrna, Tiflis, and Baku—that the theatre made its appearance.

In the last half of the nineteenth century, Armenians in these large cities, as though in an effort

to atone for their long neglect of the dramatic art, made strenuous efforts to establish a national theatrical tradition. Tiflis in Transcaucasia became a great center of Armenian culture. The Czarist regime, at the time more liberal and more sympathetic towards the cultural advancement of its subject peoples than the Turkish Sultanate, made no effort to impede the intellectual re-awakening of Armenians within its borders. In Constantinople, however, the movement met with opposition; the Armenian theatre, always frowned upon, was eventually banned, and the artists of that race were compelled to present Turkish plays and to develop a Turkish dramatic art.

In the interior of Turkey the Armenian theatre was not even permitted to make an appearance, and people of that race in those localities were not aware of the existence of such an institution. Therefore, many who came to America saw here for the first time in their lives a dramatic presentation. This lack of theatrical tradition has no doubt been responsible in large measure for the indifference of the group towards the development of a national theatrical movement in Massachusetts.

Although there have been many amateur theatrical presentations by Bay State Armenians for perhaps fifty years, there has been developed no really good amateur company. The reason for this lies in the fact that neither players nor audience were serious students of the drama. The motive in presenting plays was merely to raise money for some organization, and the players, recruited for the occasion, disbanded with its completion. Of recent years, however, groups of amateurs—the Boston Armenian Dramatic Society and

the Armenian Ardziv Dramatic Society—have been organized in Boston on a more or less permanent basis. In Lawrence, the Bethel Players of the Bethel Armenian Congregational Church, in conjunction with two other societies, annually present a series of plays in their native language and with native costumes. In other cities similar groups, under the auspices of various organizations, present dramatic efforts which show more spirit than artistic talent.

It was not until after the World War that Armenian professional actors came to the United States and presented plays in Massachusetts. Among the number were Hovanes Apelian, one of the greatest of Armenian actors, Leon Harout, Antranig, and his wife, Mme. Azniv, and Mr. and Mrs. Hovanes Zarifian. These actors and actresses were obliged to rely upon local talent to complete their casts, and performances were therefore but makeshift affairs. Even the presence of these artists failed to arouse any enthusiasm among their people for the theatre.

Of this group of professional actors, Mr. and Mrs. Hovanes Zarifian settled in Massachusetts, making their permanent home in Wollaston. Zarifian continued his theatrical activities, devoting his time and energy to the creation of amateur groups in such centers as Boston, New York, and Detroit. He coached his recruits, acted as manager, producer and director. His sudden death in the summer of 1937 proved a fatal blow to the Armenian theatrical movement in this State. Zarifian was a Russian Armenian, and a veteran of the theatre who appeared, according to his own estimate, in five hundred different plays, a record few American actors can equal. His repertoire in this

country, however, consisted of a few national plays, one or two French melodramas, of two generations back, and an occasional classic. In more recent times, English and American comedies have been translated into Armenian for presentation.

Visiting professional actors have presented more ambitious offerings, in which Shakespearean plays have been not infrequent. An anecdote frequently related by Massachusetts Armenians is rather amusing. A member of the community in a small Massachusetts town, while visiting in Boston, saw a presentation of "Othello" given in his native tongue, and returning, told his friends about "The Black Soldier." His compatriots sent the actor an invitation to present the play in their locality. Though the actor attempted to dissuade them and substitute a comedy for Shakespeare's dramatic accomplishment, they insisted upon "The Black Soldier." "But you will not appreciate it," persisted the actor, "and those who do not understand it may laugh." After he was assured an appreciative reception, the actor promised to appear, but selected a farce for presentation, believing it more appropriate to the audience. The curtain rose; the hall was full; eager faces were turned towards the stage. The farce began to unfold its ticklish situations; not a smile appeared upon a single face in the vast audience. The puzzled actors, nonplussed by this cool reception, were met at the end of the first act by a presentation committee whose spokesman asked whether they were satisfied with the behavior of the audience. "We have given strict orders that no one is to laugh," said the spokesman, "I hope that you are satisfied." Upon being told that he had made a mistake, and that this was

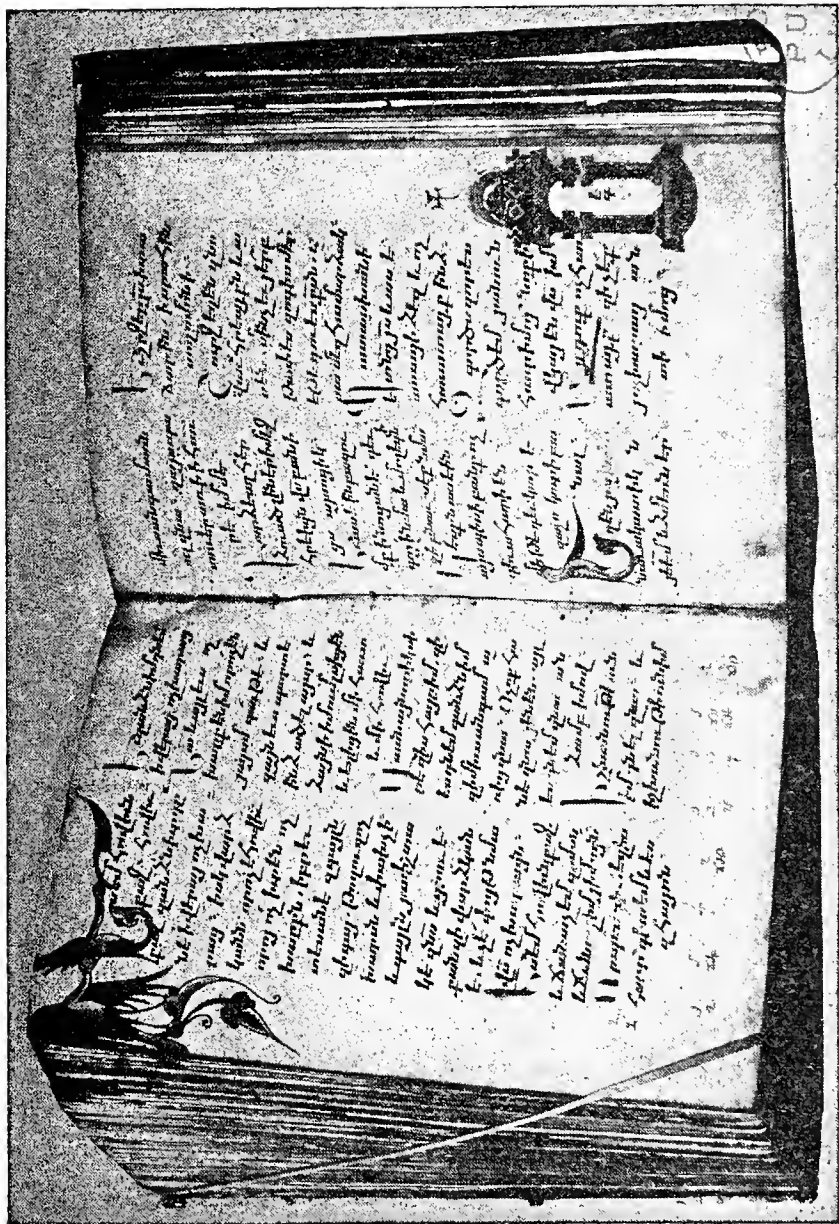
a play intended to make the audience laugh, he went out on the stage and announced, "Folks, this is not 'The Black Soldier.' It is a comedy to make you laugh. Go ahead and laugh as much as you want to."

Armenian motion pictures are few and far between in Massachusetts. Several films made in Armenia have, however, been imported and presented.

Artists

With the possible exception of the late Ivan Aivazovsky, the marine painter, the Armenians have contributed no world-famed artist to civilization, but the number of painters and other pursuants of fine arts who have won recognition in their fields of endeavor compares favorably with those of other nations. Throughout the world thousands of manuscripts preserving the glory of ancient Armenian calligraphy are housed in museums and other institutions. One of the finest examples of this art is the Armenian Bible in the Boston Public Library. The ruins of Ani, "the city of a thousand churches," attest to the ancient fame of Armenian architects. The great mosques of later Turkey, and many of the decorations and mosaics were also the work of Armenian masters. For centuries Armenian goldsmiths and silversmiths dominated the jewelry field in the Turkish Empire. Nor were they less proficient in embroidery and rug-weaving.

In Massachusetts they have not distinguished themselves in these varied endeavors but they are well represented in the field of painting. They have a recognized authority on Byzantine art and calligraphy in the person of Miss Sirarpi Der Nersessian, who



Courtesy Boston Public Library
Armenian Calligraphy
From Bible written in 1475

divides her time in teaching art between Wellesley College and Columbia University.

The dean of Armenian artists in Massachusetts is undoubtedly John H. Garo, one of the foremost photographers in the country. As a youth he had attended an American school in Armenia and had shown great proficiency in painting. Like many of his compatriots, this boy found his way to Worcester, where a brother-in-law was established. Set to work in the wire mill, he found the place alien to his artistic nature, and left his job the very day he found it. After a week's aimless wandering in search of suitable employment, he entered Worcester's Y.M.C.A. building, sat down before an available table, and began to draw. His work attracted the attention of a man seated nearby, who on learning that the boy was an Armenian enlisted the aid of the Y.M.C.A. secretary. As a result the lad was offered employment in the plant of George K. Whitney, an artistic printer. Four years later this same Mr. Whitney advised his young employee and protege to go to Boston and seek an artist's career.

Such is the background of John H. Garo, who came to Boston in 1888 to follow the career of painting, learned photography in order to earn a livelihood, and made an art of his adopted calling. Today he is a well-known figure in the artistic circles of Boston, where his studio has for many years served as a meeting-place for lovers of the arts.

Arshak Fetvajian, now living in Boston, is a painter of international renown, a great scholar, and an archaeologist. Born in Trebizond seventy years ago, he entered at the age of sixteen the newly opened Imperial Art School at Constantinople, and later

studied in Rome. He travelled thereafter through various parts of Europe, exhibiting his work in one capital after another, and receiving lucrative commissions from such important personages as the Shah of Persia and Grand Duke Constantine, son of Czar Alexander III. During a horseback tour of Russian Armenia he conceived the idea of the archaeological drawings that were to become his life work. Then the artist became the archaeologist; for many years Mr. Fetvajian visited Armenia each summer and studied churches, towers, walls, cemeteries, and all types of ruins. He has today some 2,000 water colors, sketches, and drawings, which illustrate details of various motifs pertaining to Armenian archaeology,—a unique compilation of archaeological evidence considered of great importance by scholars and historians. An appraisal of his monumental art work may be arrived at in the following statement of the president of the Royal Institute of British Archaeologists, made on the occasion of an exhibition of this Armenian's works in the galleries of the Institute: "One could not dream that any one man could produce such quantities of work unless we look at it in the light of nationality. Only an Armenian could have done that much work for Armenian archaeology." The Boston Museum of Fine Arts houses one of his most famous paintings, "The Tomb of Sultan Mohammed I."

Of artists who now live in Massachusetts, those outstanding are Armand Ishlemejian, Marvin Julian, and Yeghia Kasbarian. The latter is a portrait painter as well as a man of letters. Several other young painters have been forging ahead in their chosen field in recent years. This group includes Jacques Messia



Courtesy Worcester Museum of Fine Arts.
"Patience" by Koren Der Harootian

of Boston, Yenovk Der Hagopian, of Watertown, who does modernistic painting in oils, John Nick, whose oil paintings and water colors have aroused much interest; and Koren Der Harootian. All have held private exhibits in Boston and have received the favorable comments of competent critics.

Harootian typifies the new Armenian immigrant to this country after the War. The son of an Armenian priest, he saw his father killed at the beginning of the World War. After many harrowing experiences he found refuge among hospitable Kurdish tribes in Der-sim and with their help crossed the border into the Caucasus. After the war he came to the United States in 1922. Odd jobs aided him to get an education at the Worcester High School; later scholarships helped him obtain instruction in art. Partial recognition came when the Worcester Museum of Fine Arts purchased his painting "Patience."

IX

CUSTOMS & MANNERS

Marriage and Baptism

In the matter of religion the American-born generation seems to have a preference for American institutions. Of recent years special efforts have been made to interest them in the Armenian Church but these efforts have met with only partial success. Even in such large centers as Boston, Watertown, and Worcester the percentage of the new generation in church congregations is very small.

Although most Armenian marriages are still performed by Armenian priests, the Old-World concept of marriage has undergone a complete change. Betrothals, which at one time were almost as serious a ceremony as marriage, are still practiced, but the original meaning and regard for these ceremonies have almost completely disappeared. Through the device of a solemn engagement, the young people to be married were given an opportunity to become acquainted with each other, as it was strictly forbidden to young people to associate with the opposite sex until properly betrothed. The betrothal ceremony was performed by a priest who told the couple that they should resolve their minds for their final union, as it would be very hard for them to separate afterwards.

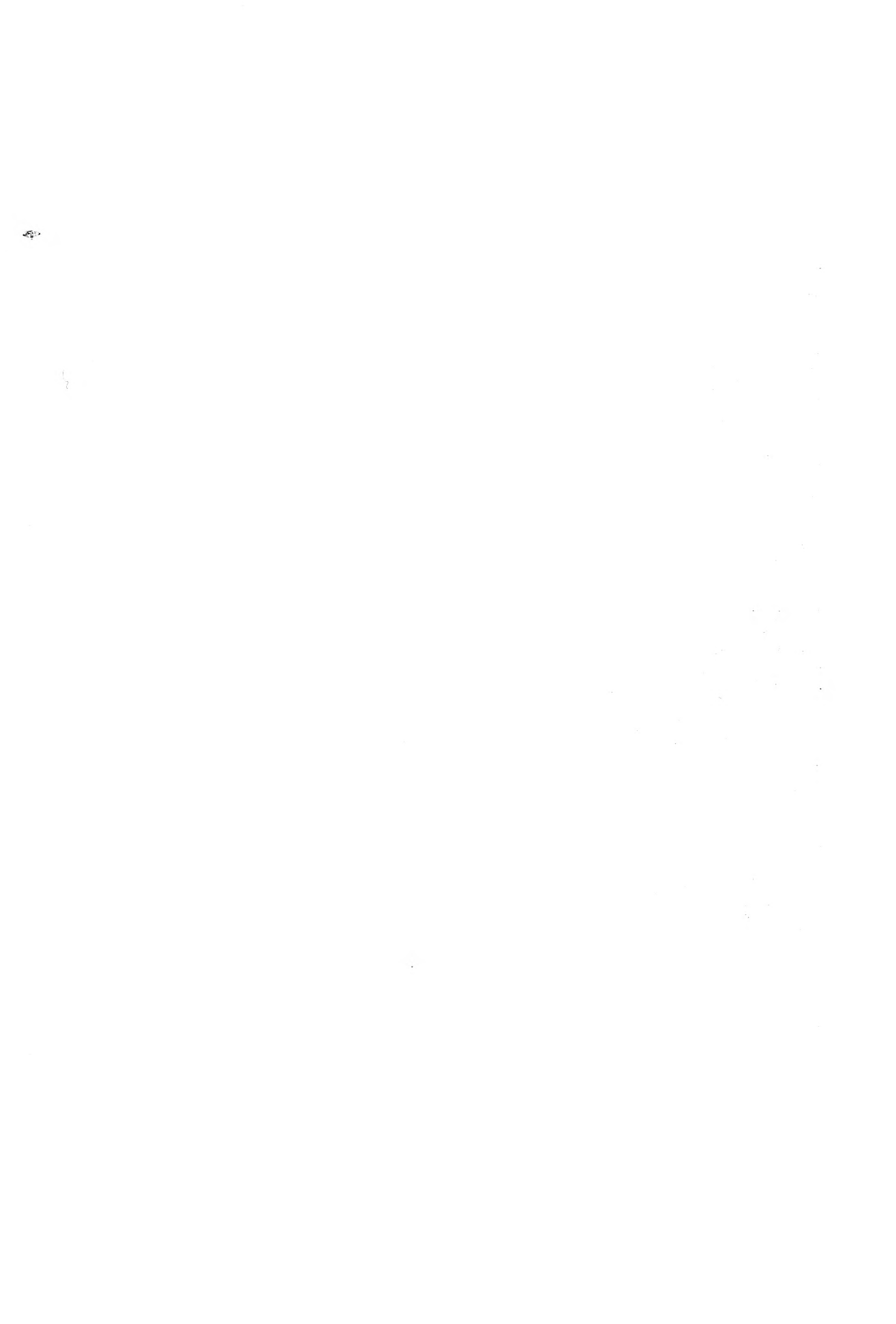
The marriage ceremony, lasting considerably longer than an hour, was performed in accordance with the ritual of the Armenian Gregorian Church.

In Turkey, marriage or divorce was purely a church affair. There was no governmental interference



Courtesy Boston Public Library

Silver Bible Cover



in marital relations. Not even a marriage license was required. The Church united those who wanted to marry and the Church separated them if it saw fit to do so. However, divorce among the Armenians in their native land was almost unheard of. The Church discouraged the practice, making infidelity the only ground for divorce. As adultery was considered a great social disgrace, especially for a woman, divorces even on this ground were very infrequent.

All these customs have changed in the United States. The church no longer controls the morals of its members and their marital troubles are settled in courts. Even though the church does not recognize civil divorces, the people pay little heed to ecclesiastical disapproval. Nevertheless, divorce is still not very popular among them.

Another custom connected with marital affairs is the relationship of the "best man." The Armenian word is "gunkahair," which literally means baptism-father. This has its origin in the old custom of having the "best man," or another member of his family, act as godfather for the children of the couple at whose wedding he assisted. A godfather in olden time was considered as a very close kinsman, and the Armenian Church to this day prohibits the marriage of a godfather to his god-daughter. This practice still is prevalent in Massachusetts, although the status of a godfather is now considered perfunctory. Wedding ceremonies at present are almost Americanized.

Baptism is a lengthy and mystical rite. The godfather holds the child in his arms while the priest goes through the ceremony. Finally the priest asks the godfather "What does the infant beg for?" The

answer is "Faith, hope, love, and baptism." Then he anoints the child with "mewron," a special holy ointment prepared from herbs and flowers. The forehead, the abdomen, and the right and left breasts of the infant are touched by him, thus making the sign of the cross. In ancient times no person could be claimed by the Church as its child and no Church ceremony could be performed on any person who had not received the holy "mewron." Men and women belonging to different sects or different religions could not be married by an Armenian priest unless they received the "mewron" by being baptized anew.

Another use of "mewron" is for the sick. When a person is critically ill, the priest anoints him with the holy ointment and prays over him. Many Armenians have testified that in many cases the patient has recovered from the sickness after such administration.

Death

A dying person, as in the Catholic faith, confesses and receives the Holy Communion. In certain sections of Armenia, professional "wailing women" were employed to extol the virtues of the dead person in mournful tunes to the accompaniment of the sobbing and weeping of the family of the deceased. Usually death notices, three to ten inches long, are published in the Armenian newspapers of Boston, advising the friends and relatives of the death and of the date and place of the funeral ceremonies. Of late years, a custom has been started of taking a collection during the funeral services for a charitable purpose. The funeral services are held in the church and completed at the cemetery. Mass is usually said for the soul of the

departed forty days after the burial. Many devout families have Mass celebrated for their dead annually during the anniversary week of the death.

Superstitions

It is curious to note that superstitious beliefs of a more serious nature, such as omens of death, did not survive the ridicule of the young generation, while the unimportant signs of social happenings have persisted. The most common of these is, perhaps, the nervous twitching of the eyes. It is called the "play of the eye" in Armenian and one can hear people say: "My right eye is playing, so we are going to receive some good news."

A twitch of the eardrum is interpreted as a sign of someone talking about the person. "My ear is speaking" is the expression, and it is very common to hear people who are talking about an absent friend say, "So-and-so, let his ear speak. . . ."

The itching of the palm is considered as a sign of receiving or paying out money (the left for receiving, the right for paying). The itching of the sole of the foot denotes that the person is to make a trip. When a spoon falls off the table during the meal, it is said that company will come. As for guests who overstay their time and abuse the hospitality of the host, sprinkling of salt on their shoes will make them take their leave; this arises from the custom of the old country people taking off their shoes upon entering a house and leaving them by the door. Although this custom cannot be observed in this country, the expression has survived and is used about tactless guests.

The screech of an owl and the howl of a dog are

considered ill omens and portents of death. Another omen of death is a knock on the door by some supernatural agent.

Belief in magic, too, has been prevalent among the Armenians, but it has not thrived in the atmosphere of the New World. However, they talk about a book of magic called "Vetzhazarya," which supposedly contains all the secrets of the occult science. There are reputed to be only a few copies of this book and no person has actually seen it. The popular belief is that some of the people who have tried to study the book have become demented. Another belief holds that a person who wants to learn the art of magic must swear never to use it for personal advantage.

There is no word in the language for ghost, although there is the belief that the dead sometimes return and indulge in activities. However, there is a general belief in spirits, called significantly "our betters," who are supposed to meddle in human affairs with the intention of helping. Churches, monasteries, the ruins of ancient edifices and wells have their spirits, designated as the "master" of such a place. In some sections there is the curious belief that "our betters" usually braid the tails of horses during their nocturnal visit to the stables.

Fortune-telling, quite prevalent among the credulous peasants as well as city dwellers, has been brought over to this country in the form of "coffee-cup reading." Most of this, however, is done in a spirit of jest, although there are a number of people who have faith in it. When the black coffee is consumed the drinker turns his cup upside down and the grounds of powdered coffee form various patterns on the sides

of the cup. The fortune teller looks at these and sees in them omens of future events.

A noticeable example of the mysticism and the belief in divination prevalent in the mother country from the dawn of time is strikingly portrayed as the Armenian contribution to the Festival of Nations' Exhibit, given each year by International Institute. In costume the group enacts the events which take place on the eve of Ascension Day, when the girls who wish to have their fortunes told gather seven kinds of flowers and place them in a bowl containing water drawn from seven wells. The bowl is left in the open, and the stars shining on the water make the fortunes come true. Women and girls gather to hear the luck of their friends and later the young men join them in dancing.

The origin of this custom is found in the pagan rites of antiquity. Outside Artaxata, the ancient capital of Armenia (on the Araxes River), was the best known temple of Tiur, the scribe of Aramazd, Supreme God—the giver of prosperity who issued decrees concerning events in human lives. The temple site was called "Erazamuyn," which means "interpreter of dreams." At the temple was a school where special attention was paid to the art of divination. The interpretation of dreams was a system handed down by priest or soothsayer to the pupils.

These decrees, according to Armenian belief, were annually given on the world mountain (Ararat) during the Zagmuk, or New Year festival. In Christian Armenia that night became associated with Ascension Day. The people reiterate an ancient tradition when they tell that at an unknown and mystic hour of the

night which precedes Ascension, silence envelops all nature. Heaven comes nearer. All the springs and streams cease to flow. The flowers and shrubs, the hills and stones, begin to salute each other and each declares its specific virtue. If one is aware of that hour he can change anything to gold by dipping it in water and expressing his wish, in the name of God. Some report that the springs and rivers flow with gold, which can be secured only at the right moment.

On Ascension Day in Armenia, the people, by means of books that tell fortunes, or objects deposited on the previous day in a basin of water, with herbs and flowers, try to discover what luck awaits them during the year. The things which have been exposed to the gaze of the stars during the mystic night are covered by a veil. A young virgin draws them out, one by one, while verses divining the future are recited.

Only persons with evil minds have the "evil-eye," one glance of which is enough to destroy humans or objects. The color blue neutralizes the effect of the "evil-eye" and as a protection the Armenians as well as other races of the Near East have blue beads on people and animals that are especially liable to be noticed by the "evil-eye" because of their striking qualities.

M. Tcheraz in his book "L'Orient Inedit" gives a very striking example of the belief in the evil-eye in the following story. A man who was very envious of his neighbor who had attained wealth within a short time, went to a professional "evil-eye" and asked his help. He and the "evil-eye" were to take a boat and wait for the vessel of the rich neighbor to come so that the "evil-eye" could destroy it. "I'll do it with

pleasure," said the man who had the destructive power, "but I am near-sighted. You must point out the vessel to me." On the boat the envious person finally saw the ship approaching and exclaimed, "There it is! It looks like a point on the horizon." "My, My!" exclaimed the "evil-eye," "How can you distinguish such a small object? What eyes you must have!" And then and there the jealous person lost his sight.

Holidays

The principal religious holidays observed are Christmas (celebrated on January 6) and Easter. Of the two, Easter is the greater. Many attend their church only once or twice during the year, but on these holidays the churches are overcrowded.

No festivals are observed, although there are several such events in the Armenian calendar. Of these, Vardavar, an inheritance from pagan times now transformed into a church holiday, is still remembered but is not celebrated as it was in the homeland. Vartanantz (Vartanian Day) is a national holiday which has also been adopted and is observed by the church in February. It is in commemoration of the battle of Avarair.

The World War and its aftermath have created several new national holidays for the Armenians which are, however, subjects of controversy among them. Of these, only one is accepted by all factions as well as by the Church. That is April 24, the anniversary of the edict of the Turkish government deporting the Armenians from their homes in 1915, which resulted in the annihilation of more than one million Armenians during the War. It is called Mourning Day.

Independence Day is celebrated by the partisans of the defunct Republic of Armenia, while another faction celebrates November 29 as the date when Armenia was "sovietized."

Lent, Assumption Day, Palm Sunday, etc., are also celebrated by the devout.

In accordance with an old tradition children born on or near a church holiday were given the name of the Saint connected with that holiday. Thus a child born on St. Gregory's day usually was named Gregory and one born on Holy Cross day received the name of Khatchadour (gift of the Cross), and the Easter children were given the Christian name of Haroutiune (Resurrection). The old custom of celebrating the name-day instead of the birthday is still practiced in the State.

X

FOOD

The only characteristic of Armenians in contemporary Massachusetts that is definitely Armenian is their cuisine. Even though many years may have elapsed since his departure from his native land, the average Armenian resident of Massachusetts still clings tenaciously to the dietary customs of his youth. The cuisine, like that of many another racial group in the State, contains items which, while they seem odd to Americans of other background, are yet dear to the hearts and palates of those from Armenia. To be sure, some slight modifications in eating habits have been made. The typical American breakfast has been almost universally adopted, and chops and steaks, sausages and tinned foods, unknown to Armenians in their native habitat, find their way to dining tables. On the whole, however, the diet is the same which prevailed in the homeland.

Their bread, "dan hatz" or "parag hatz" depending on whether it is home-baked or purchased, is about a foot in circumference, and not much thicker than a Uneda biscuit, which it greatly resembles in taste. As this bread hardens quickly, it is slightly moistened with water before it is eaten and will keep indefinitely.

To the American observer it seems that the Armenian cook wields the spice-jar with too lavish a hand, and the use of oils and fats also seems rather excessive. Although in the native land melted butter is the chief culinary lubricant, here animal fats have

been substituted to some extent and butter is reserved for the concoction of certain special delicacies. Olive oil is widely used, both for frying and in salads. Since most Armenians in Massachusetts came from spots far inland, fish is not a popular article in the national diet. Chicken, while not commonly served, is a delicacy enjoyed on its rare appearances. Vegetables and cereals are of more importance than meat in the typical meal, but lamb, prepared in various forms, is quite commonly seen.

Vegetables, largely of the legume and leafy varieties, are much used in summer, while their place is filled in winter by chick-peas and lentils, with potatoes of but secondary importance. Onions abound in almost every dish but garlic is sparsely used. Scallions, parsley and tomatoes, either separately or combined in a salad, are consumed in large quantities. The basic element of the Armenian diet is cereal, principally wheat and rice. Of these "bulghur" is the most important. Made of branless wheat, boiled, cracked, and dried in a distinctively Armenian fashion, "bulghur" forms the backbone of nine-tenths of the dishes consumed. Rice is used exactly as is "bulghur" and the two are interchangeable as ingredients in more than a score of dishes, but the former is the more popular. As for cheese, there is a peculiarly Armenian variety made by dairy farmers of that race in this country. Another variety imported from Balkan countries is also popular with them.

Dear to the Armenian palate is the "matzoon" prepared by every housewife and consumed in quantity. This is made of milk, fermented with vegetable yeast, brought to a boil and set aside to cool. The

careful housewife keeps out a bit of each "matzoon" to add to the next supply she will make, as a little of the old is needed to congeal the new. If she is forgetful, a bit may be borrowed from a neighbor, but it is not for sale in the stores. The "matzoon" beaten, with water added, makes a buttermilk drink considered delicious.

The preparation of the food is a lengthy and involved process, and since some concoctions require two or three hours of preliminary attention before the cooking process may be begun, the housewife, particularly if the family is large, spends the greater part of her time in the kitchen. Most commonly used and most popular is "pilaf," a dish which may be prepared in various ways. The simplest "pilaf" is achieved by boiling one part of "bulghur" in two parts of water, and adding melted butter, salt, and a bit of black pepper to the resulting mush. One may of course improve on this basic "pilaf" by adding chick-peas, lentils, or noodles and a generous amount of either fresh or canned tomatoes. For a more succulent "pilaf" chicken or lamb broth is substituted for water, and minced lamb or chicken combined with the finished product. A finely chopped onion fried in melted butter serves as a "pilaf" accessory.

"Dolma," another favorite, is a term which covers an entire category rather than any particular article of diet. The word itself means "stuffed," and anything filled with any other ingredient is therefore called a "dolma." Vegetables are most commonly used for the exterior portion of these culinary delights, and summer squash, egg plant, tomatoes, and green peppers are most popular. After being washed and

hollowed out, these vegetables are filled with a stuffing made of finely chopped meat, blended with "bulghur" or rice, and seasoned with onions, pepper, and salt. Boiling water and melted butter are then added and the whole allowed to simmer slowly. When vine or cabbage leaves are filled with a similar stuffing, the resulting product is called "sarma." This word means "wrapped" and describes the process involved. "Dolmas" made without meat, and prepared with olive oil, are known as "mock-dolmas" and are usually served as hors d'oeuvres. Mackerel and mussels, as well as the stomachs, colons, and part of the intestines of lambs, are also stuffed and cooked dolma-fashion.

Vegetables are often cooked with meat, resulting in a special delicacy which may be called the "Armenian ragout." The simplest way of preparing this article of diet is by stewing diced meat in butter or animal fat, and then adding tomatoes, either fresh, canned, or in the form of sauce. Egg plant, squash, fresh beans, okra, leeks, and celery are commonly used in the preparation of this dish, although dried beans or peas, potatoes, chick-peas, or onions, may be substituted upon occasion. Although a combination ragout may be prepared by blending the various vegetables, each vegetable generally appears alone in its particular concoction. Meatless ragouts are also seen at times, and various vegetables, particularly okra, leeks, egg plant, dried beans, and artichokes, are cooked in olive oil and served cold.

Olive oil and black olives are most common, particularly during the Lenten season. A popular story, long preserved by tradition, relates that when the Greek Patriarch declared anything which comes from

the sea to be a suitable article of the Lenten diet, the Armenian Patriarch, nothing daunted, permitted his communicants the use of anything that grew in the soil, and insisted upon strict abstinence not only from meat but from dairy products. That is why olive oil is so commonly used in the pre-Easter period.

Among popular meat dishes are roast lamb, roast pork, and roast beef, borrowed from American bills of fare. The typical Armenian dishes, which may be found in homes and restaurants throughout the State, include "shish-kebab," "tas-kebab," "kezartma," "kouzou-bash," "pacha," "Khashlama," and fried or broiled lamb kidneys and liver. "Shish-kebab" is prepared by impaling slices of lamb upon a skewer, sometimes alternating them with bits of egg-plant, green pepper, onions, and tomato, and broiling the whole over an open fire. "Tas-kebab" is made stew-fashion, by cooking diced lamb with onions, tomatoes, and various rich and interesting spices. When "tas-kebab" is served as a sauce for "pilaf," as is quite often the case, the resulting concoction is called "tas-pilaf." "Kezartma" is quite similar to American roast lamb, except that the meat is cut into small pieces, fixed up with tomato, onion, and spices, and then roasted in the oven. Sliced potatoes are also added to "Kezartma" before roasting. Lamb head, thoroughly cleaned, and either boiled or roasted is called "kouzou bash." All parts of the lamb are utilized; the feet, carefully cleaned, and boiled till tender, are known as "pacha." "Khashlama" is nothing more nor less than boiled lamb.

A group of distinctive articles of Armenian diet belong to the "keuftteh" family. "Keuftteh" or "kheyma"

as it is known in Harpoot is to the Armenian what the baked bean is to the Yankee. It is made by blending finely chopped raw meat with "bulghur," and kneading the whole into a doughlike substance, adding water slowly to soften the "Kheyma." Scallions, parsley, salt and pepper, are generally added to the mixture, which, spread with the same chopped green vegetables, is eaten with or without bread. To the uninitiated the thought of eating raw meat, even though no trace of it can be seen in the finished product, is not a pleasant one, but once this initial squeamishness is overcome the eater becomes a staunch partisan of "kheyma." American missionaries who have spent some time in Turkey, as well as other American partakers of the Armenian diet, pronounce it a delicious and distinctive Oriental dish. Indeed, one may even cook "keuftteh." This is done by cutting it into pieces the size of an egg, which are then opened, filled with a typical Armenian stuffing, and rounded into balls placed in boiling broth and cooked for perhaps ten minutes. Sometimes "keuftteh" balls are fried instead of being boiled. Another variant is "sini keuftteh," prepared like an American pie, with raw "keuftteh" playing the part of crust, and stuffing masquerading as fruit. Any variation of "keuftteh" may be served either hot or cold.

"Herissa," also called "keshkek," another distinctive dish, is made of branless wheat and either chicken or lamb, previously boiled and then beaten together until the ingredients are so completely blended they cannot be identified. "Herissa" requires a five-hour period of preparation, and is served with a sauce made of melted butter. "Lahmajoon," an

Arabian recipe, whose name means dough and meat, is a dish formerly used extensively by Armenians in or near the Arab territories of the former Ottoman empire. Imported to Massachusetts, it is prepared by putting seasoned chopped meat over flattened dough, and baking it in the oven.

Armenian delicatessen consists largely of either "pasderma" or "soojook," the former rashers of dried beef heavily seasoned with garlic and spice; the latter a sausage-like edible, stuffed into a casing and subsequently dried.

Nor is the diet devoid of confections. "Basdegh" and "rojik" are made of grape juice, wheat starch and nuts. "Paklava" and "kadaif" are festive pastries prepared for holiday occasions. Nut meats and dried fruits, particularly figs, raisins, and apricots, are nibbled between meals and served to guests. At any hour, the chance caller at an Armenian home is likely to have set before him the familiar demi-tasse of rich Turkish coffee, which must be sipped slowly to avoid the pulverized grounds that make up half the mixture. He is often served roasted chick-peas called "leblebi" and salted pumpkin seeds, but it is only on special occasions that he is so fortunate as to receive the cherished rose- conserve, flavored with rose petals from a special rose bush imported from Turkey.

Gourmets unacquainted with the food may find a delightful variant among the following recipes prepared by "Coco," famous Armenian restaurateur of Boston. Even for those without the slightest suggestion of an epicurean streak the recipes will work surprisingly well.

RECIPES

Matzoon

- 1 qt. milk
- 2 tablespoons matzoon yeast

Boil milk for 10 minutes. Let cool in a bowl enough to have finger withstand the heat. Add yeast. Cover bowl with a plate and put cloths over it. After five or six hours the milk will be congealed into curds, which is matzoon, or yoghoort.

Matzoon Soup

- 1 pint matzoon
- 1½ quart lamb broth
- 2 eggs
- ½ cup wheat (specially prepared)
- 2 tablespoons flour
- salt
- 1 onion
- 1 tablespoon dry mint

Beat eggs, matzoon and flour together and mix with broth. Boil the mixture with wheat. Melt butter in pan, add chopped onion and mint and boil until onion is browned. Pour over soup when wheat has become soft.

Pilaf

- 1 cup bulghur
- 2 cups water (or lamb or chicken broth)
- ½ lb. butter
- 1 onion (medium)
- 1 tomato
- salt
- black pepper

Put butter in pot and boil. Add chopped onion and

cook until browned. Add bulghur and mix while cooking for five minutes. Add water, tomato and seasoning and let simmer until water is completely absorbed.

For rice pilaf substitute rice for bulghur omitting the onion and tomatoes. Shreaded noodles may be substituted for onions.

Sarma

- 1 lb. vine leaves
- 1 lb. chopped lamb
- 2 onions
- 1 cup bulghur (or rice)
- salt and pepper
- parsley

Mix chopped lamb, chopped onions, parsley and bulghur together and season with salt and pepper. Take tender vine leaves and fill with the mixture, wrapping it with the leaves. Arrange wrapped leaves in pot, cover with water, put a weight on sarma so it can't unwrap while cooking and cook on medium fire until leaves and stuffing become tender.

Olive Oil Sarma

- 1 lb. vine leaves
- 1 lb. onions
- $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. rice
- 1 cup olive oil
- $\frac{1}{8}$ cup currants
- parsley
- salt and pepper

Boil rice, currants, for ten minutes. Chop onions and brown in olive oil and mix with the boiled rice, adding parsley and seasoning. Wrap and cook like sarma.

Guvej—(Eggplant and meat)

- 1 lb. eggplant
- 1 lb. lamb breast
- 2 onions
- 2 tomatoes
- salt and pepper

Cut eggplant into one-inch cubes, sprinkle with salt and let it stay for ten minutes. Put meat and chopped onions in pot and cook for ten minutes. Wash the salted eggplant and put in pot over meat and onions, and cook another ten minutes. Add tomatoes and seasoning and cook slowly until all ingredients have become soft and tender.

Shish Kebab

- boned lamb
- tomatoes
- eggplant
- green peppers
- onions

Cut lamb into cubes about one inch in size. Season with salt and black pepper. Put cubes of meat on a skewer alternating each piece of meat with a vegetable (tomato, green pepper, cubed eggplant and onion if desired). Place skewers on charcoal fire turning occasionally until cooked.

Paklava

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| 1 lb. dough leaves | 1 lb. butter |
| 2 lbs. walnuts | 2 lbs. sugar |

Take a pound of dough leaves almost as thin as paper, and spread it on cake pan in layers. Spread crushed walnuts between alternate leaves. Add butter and put in medium oven. Take it out when dough is browned, cut with knife diamond shape and pour over it the sugar melted into syrup. Serve cold.

XI

CONCLUSION

It is difficult to compile in a small volume of a hundred odd pages the many phases of the history of Armenians, who either by choice or necessity have sought, acquired, and enjoyed the hospitality of this great Commonwealth for about half of a century. Such an attempt may only be characterized as a brief resume' of the background of the people, of their economic and political conditions, of their religion, arts, sciences, professions, and vocational enterprises and accomplishments.

History has recorded innumerable incidents wherein the true characteristics of this people are prominently noted. Their spirit, imbued with love of liberty, has led them through centuries of struggle against overwhelming odds and has taught them the true meaning of self-sacrifice.

Migration, in its original inception, meant to a great majority of Armenians a temporary separation from their families. Deprived of the bare necessities of life, the Armenian youth went to a self-imposed exile in quest of means to support his bride or his family. Many a man, upon his return to the family hearth, was greeted by a son whom he had left during the early period of pregnancy, now grown to manhood. Ruefully he gazed upon the once youthful but now wry face of his wife where years of misery had left gruesome scars.

Such were the original immigrants, who, after their arrival here, found nothing in common with the

people in this country. The contrast was extremely striking—features, customs, manners, education, language, and even the means of self-determination were different. Timidity caused by the new environment kept them aloof and deprived them of opportunities for self-adjustment.

For years they retained their accustomed manner of habitation, and associated only with their own kind, subjecting themselves to natural criticism and prejudice. Some among them, however, abandoned their seclusion and sought the friendship and companionship of the native element and with the latter's co-operation and encouragement were able to pursue and attain accomplishments worthy of mention.

The World War changed the status of the immigration of Armenians more than of any other people. Many thousands came to the United States and a great number of them established themselves in this Commonwealth.

Retaining the natural aspirations and characteristics of the race and reverently guarding their love of freedom, the new immigrants have become a part of the American public, with all the duties and privileges of citizens. Their outlook upon life has changed considerably. They are no longer so-called "undesirable aliens," in isolation, but have made remarkable progress in their endeavor for self-adjustment.

The American-born Armenians in Massachusetts, as well as in other States, can hardly be distinguished from other Americans. With the possible exception of their food, which is prepared for them by their parents, there is nothing foreign in their customs and habits. The native language is spoken by the foreign-

born. Their children learn it, but hardly use it after they attain the school age.

The American-born not only look like Americans but they feel and think as Americans. Many Armenians of the old generation, among them editors, priests, writers, professional men, have been heard to complain of the indifference of the new generation toward racial ideals and traditions. "It is impossible to keep them as Armenians" is the general belief of all the older people. In recent years the attempts to organize these young people into Armenian societies, conceived by and similar to those of the immigrant generation, have not justified the hopes and expectations of their elders. Even the immigrant generation is strongly imbued with this tendency to assimilate American customs. They join American fraternal organizations and political parties and in their way imitate American customs.

The Armenians as a group, always sensitive to an environment superior to that of their origin, are rapidly merging into the American pattern. Armenian leaders believe that they will be completely absorbed within fifty years, if the present restriction of immigration is maintained. The settlers in Massachusetts have been too few to influence American customs, speech or dress. But the traits that have sustained this people through centuries of adversity will be a welcome heritage for future citizens of the Commonwealth. Industry, loyalty, endurance and moral fortitude are qualities that should endure even when ethnic identity has vanished.

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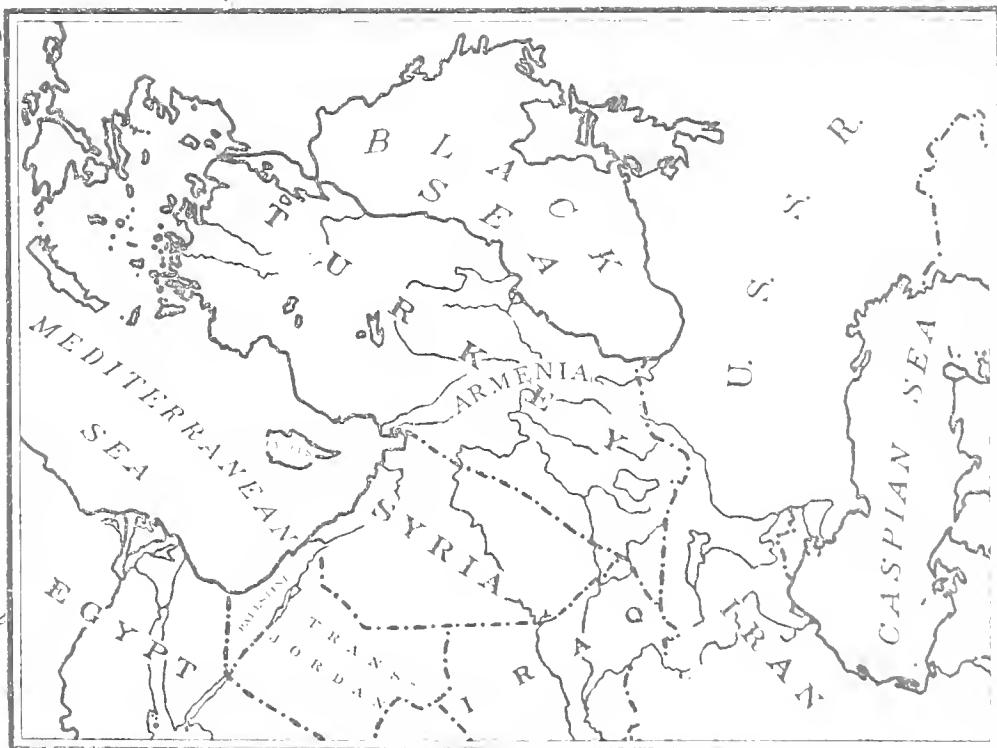
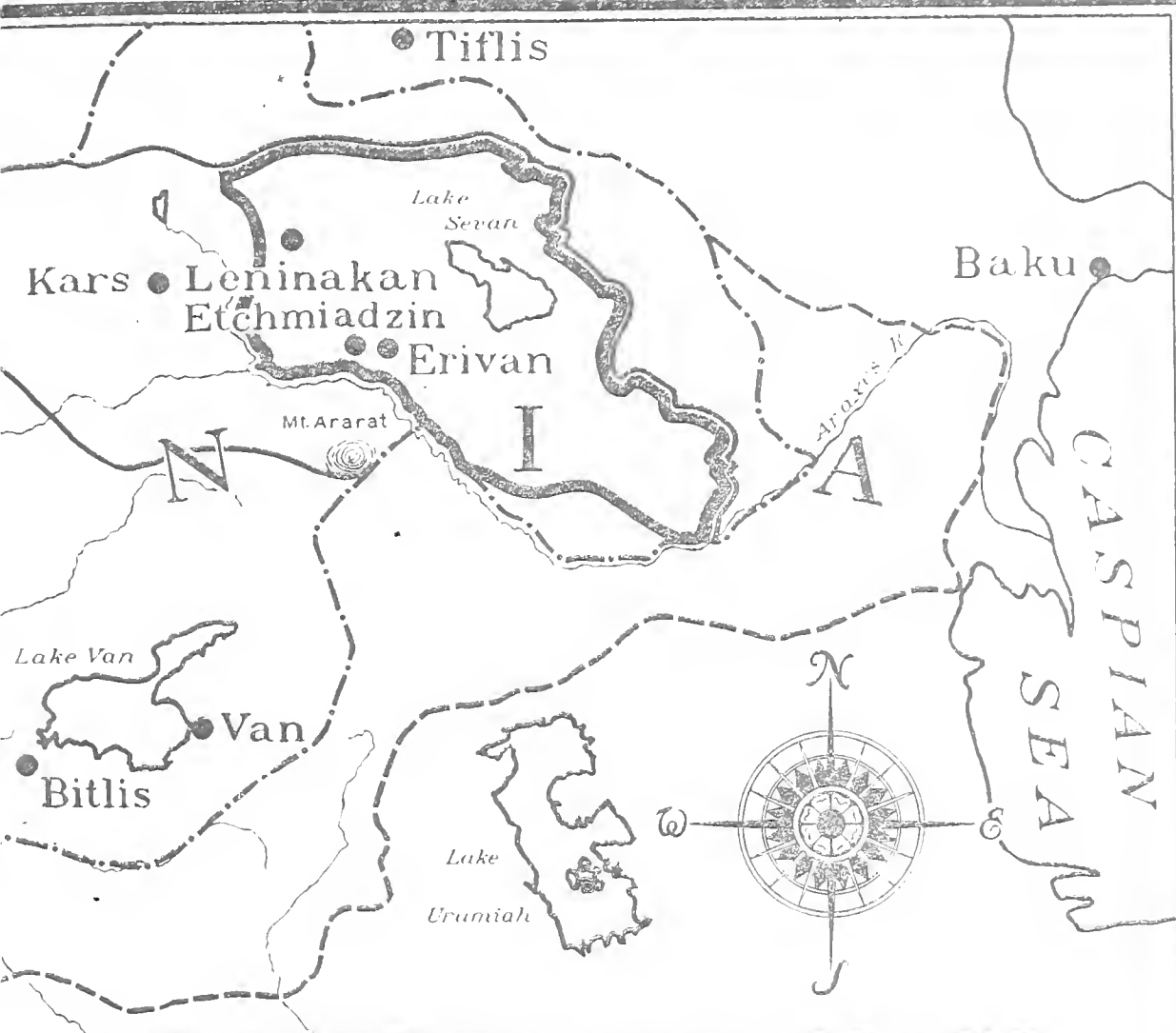
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